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FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

STORIES OF
BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

A WINNING RISK :

OR, THE BOY WHO MADE GOOD. *By A SELF-MADE MAN.*



"Hold!" cried Jack, dashing in at the door, followed by Jennie Norris. "What in thunder are you doing, Titus Granville?" The young rascal paused with the hatchet uplifted, gave a startled glance at the newcomers, then turned and fled.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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A WINNING RISK

OR,

THE BOY WHO MADE GOOD

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.

THE YOUNG INVENTOR.

"I wish I had your head, Jack," said Ed Risdon.

"What's the matter with your own head, old man?" inquired his companion with a quizzical look in his honest blue eyes.

"There's nothing particularly the matter with it, only it hasn't got the same kind of gray matter yours has."

"How do you know it hasn't?"

"I know it all right," replied Risdon with an emphatic nod. "I can't figure out schemes and new-fangled ideas the way you do. You've got the most wonderful nut of any chap in Seaport."

"If you wasn't my best friend, I'd think you were kidding me."

"I'm not kidding you," answered Risdon solemnly. "Besides, I'm not the only one who has said the same thing in different words. My father says you're a regular genius."

"He said that, eh? I'm sure I'm very much obliged to him for his good opinion."

"Then I heard Squire Norris say that you were a boy who was bound to make your mark."

"Did Squire Norris really say that?" asked Jack Rushton, looking particularly pleased.

"That's what he did. And Jennie Norris says you're the smartest boy in town."

"Oh, come now, Ed!" said Jack, with a flush, "you're laying it on pretty thick, aren't you?"

"I'm only telling the truth. In fact, everybody speaks well of you except——"

"Except who?"

"Titus Granville. He's sore on you because Jennie Norris prefers your company to his."

"Oh, he's always been down on me ever since I can remember. He doesn't think I'm good enough to associate with. However, that doesn't worry me much. This is a free country, and he's at liberty to keep his distance."

"The boys were talking the other day about how clever you were in inventing things, when he chips in with one of his sneering remarks. He said your models were only playthings, and not worth patenting. That made me mad, and I told him that he only said it because he was jealous of your ability. He got as red as a boiled lobster and called me a liar. I started for his scalp at that, and if it hadn't been for the other fellows, who interfered, we'd have had a mix-up."

"I'm much obliged to you, Ed, for standing up for me, but I don't want you to get into trouble on my account," said Rushton.

"Don't you worry about me. As long as we are chums, and I hope that will be for life, I won't allow any one to run you down before me."

"Thank you, Ed. You're a true friend, old fellow."

"Well, you'd do the same for me, wouldn't you?"

"Of course I would. I'd do most anything for you, Ed."

"I know one thing you wouldn't do," grinned Risdon.

"What's that?"

"Let me cut you out with Jennie Norris."

"Oh, come now, you're always giving me a sly dig about

her. I admit that I like Jennie a whole lot. She's one of the nicest girls in town, if not the nicest."

"She's all right. I've heard lots of people say she's the prettiest girl in Seaport. That's why Titus Granville is dead gone on her. But he hasn't any more chance with her than the man in the moon. She's got him sized up to a hair. He thinks because his father is president of the Seaport Bank that he's It. But that is where he's away off. A few fellows take their hats off to him, and flatter him up, but I'll bet they're playing him for all they're worth."

The two boys were slowly walking out toward the edge of a line of precipitous cliffs that stretched up and down the coast for miles, broken at irregular intervals by harbors, bays and estuaries of varying extent.

One of these breaks formed the harbor of Seaport, on whose horseshoe-like curvature was situated the town of Seaport.

The entrance to the harbor, from headland to headland, was perhaps half a mile across, and midway between these points, a short distance seaward, was Coffin Rock.

On this narrow granite foundation rose a tall, white lighthouse known as Coffin Light.

The boys were aiming for the nearest point to the lighthouse, which as yet they could not see, owing to the height of the cliff, and the fact that they were ascending a long, gentle slope.

In fact, it was not possible to see even the lantern of the light, the glass of which was now glistening in the rays of the morning sun, from this point until one got close to the edge of the cliff.

"There's the Light now," said Risdon, as he threw himself down at full length on the elastic turf, to lie gazing at the brilliant blue Atlantic, stretching far away to the distant horizon, bathed in the glowing sunshine.

Jack Rushton followed his companion's example, except that his eyes went no further seaward than the glittering lantern of the lighthouse, in which he seemed to be uncommonly interested.

The land ended a few yards from where the lads lay as suddenly as if it had been cut sharply off, and went down perpendicularly some two hundred and fifty feet to where the transparent waves broke softly, with hardly a sound, among the weedy rocks.

"What are you thinking about, Jack?" asked Ed at length.

"I think I could make that lamp yonder give out four times as much light as it does now and pierce the fogs that come this way occasionally," replied Rushton thoughtfully.

"You could!" exclaimed his chum in surprise. "Why, the lenses and reflectors in that lantern are of the regulation quality, and are said to be as powerful as any in the lighthouse service."

"I won't deny that, Ed, but they can be improved just the same."

"And you think you can improve them?"

"I am almost sure of it. I've examined them carefully. I've drawings in my workshop that I secured a month ago, when I was out to the light on the morning after the fog when the three-masted schooner Sarah Richardson went ashore down yonder on that patch of white beach which you can't see from here."

"Say, that was a funny thing, the going ashore of that schooner so near the light. The skipper said he couldn't see the Coffin Light at all that night, owing to the fog, which he and his crew declared to be as thick as pea soup. There are persons around here who have said that they didn't believe the lamps were going all night, otherwise the captain must have seen the light."

"That's nonsense. The light was going all right. The investigation proved it. The fact of the matter is, that the reflectors were not strong enough to pierce the fog as far out as the schooner's track."

"How can you tell that?"

"I heard the evidence given on both sides and formed my own conclusions after visiting the lantern. At any rate, the government has offered a reward for a more powerful grade of reflectors, and I'm going to try to win it."

"You are! Why, you'll be up against some of the smartest brains in the country."

"That doesn't worry me any, for I've got a scheme in hand that I believe to be a winner. I'm working on the model now."

"You are! You never told me anything about it before."

"I didn't mean to tell you now, but it slipped out. It's a great secret, and I don't want you to say a word about it."

"Of course I won't, if you say so. You know you can trust me, don't you?"

"Yes. I'm sure I can."

"I wish you'd show me this model of yours," said Risdon eagerly.

"I will as soon as I get it into proper shape. At present it is only on the stocks, as it were. You wouldn't understand it, and I couldn't explain its efficiency until I had all the parts together."

"When will you have it all together?"

"I can't tell you. It takes time to work out my ideas, and this is the most important invention I've ever tackled."

"I wasn't wrong when I said you had the most wonderful head of any person in Seaport. Why, if you won the government prize, your name would be in all the papers in the country. You'd make both fame and fortune at one swoop."

"That's what I'm aiming at. I want to make my mark in the world."

"You'll do it, I'll bet, even if you don't win this particular prize. So you think you can make that light four times as bright? I s'pose you mean to make the lamps four times as big as they are now?"

"Not at all. My plan is to use the same lamps that are there now."

"Then I don't see how you are going to get around it."

"Well, I suppose not. You said a while ago that you couldn't figure out schemes and new-fangled ideas the way I do," replied Jack with a smile.

"That's right. I can't. The way you get at things is like so much Greek to me. Why, it would give me a headache to think and study how to bring about a certain combination of principles until I got them all to work together like you do. I don't see how you, or other people whose minds run in the same channel as yours does, manage to get at results."

"Some of the most important inventions in this world have been constructed on simple lines. Take Eli Whitney's

cotton gin, for instance. This was a machine he produced for separating the green seed from the cotton. Until he put his mind on inventing such a machine the seed had to be separated by hand, which was a slow and difficult job. There was a continuous kick by Southern cotton growers for some method by which the separation of the seeds and fibers could be accomplished, yet nobody could figure out a practical method until Whitney got on the job. When he exhibited his machine, which actually did the work, it was so simple that any fool almost could duplicate it. That's how he came to be beaten out of the fruits of his brain. I have no doubt that hundreds of people kicked themselves when they saw how easy the thing could be done because the idea never occurred to their minds."

"I guess it must be that some people are born with minds built in that way, and you are one of them. You'll become a great man some day, while I'll never be heard of outside my friends and acquaintances."

"Oh, there are many other ways of becoming famous, Ed. Inventors aren't the only ones, by long odds, and not all of them become generally known, by a good deal. It's only the fellows who manage to fill some universal need that actually get into the limelight. The rest are probably lucky if they make a living."

"Well, you'll get into the limelight all right if you can increase the illuminating capacity of the American lighthouse system," said Risdon, nodding his head conclusively.

At that moment the boys were startled by the shrill scream of a girl not far away.

CHAPTER II.

A LIFE FOR A LIFE.

Both boys instantly sprang to their feet.

"Some girl is in trouble up here," cried Jack Rushton. "Come on, Ed, we must go to her assistance."

A second scream, more thrilling than the first, reached their ears and urged them into a run.

There were many stunted pine and cedar trees and many big boulders along the top of the cliffs, which prevented them from getting anything like a clear view ahead.

In a few minutes, however, they dashed out into an open space and saw, not a girl, as they had expected, but a boy of about their own age, kneeling at the edge of the cliff, looking downward.

"Hello! What's the trouble?" cried Jack, as he came up.

The boy looked up, and he and Ed recognized the white and frightened face of Titus Granville.

"Save her! Save her!" ejaculated Titus, in a quavering and excited tone.

"Who do you mean? Where is the girl who screamed just now?"

"Jennie Norris. She has fallen down the cliff, and is hanging to a tree."

"Jennie Norris!" gasped Jack, his face turning white and his heart almost ceasing to beat from a sudden fear for the girl he thought most of, next to his mother. "How came she to fall?" he asked, as he bent over and saw Jennie, motionless and apparently unconscious, caught in the

branches of a stout cedar that grew out of the face of the cliff several yards below, with a sheer drop of over 200 feet between her and a patch of white beach that the incoming tide was flowing over.

Granville made no reply, for he seemed paralyzed with fright.

"Good gracious!" cried Risdon. "How are we to reach her?"

There did not seem any way of reaching her without the aid of a rope.

As long as she remained motionless she was comparatively safe, but who could say how long that might be?

Jack, intent on her rescue, studied the face of the cliff and finally made up his mind what to do.

"You'll have to help me, Ed," he said, kicking off his shoes and tossing aside his jacket.

"What are you going to do?" asked Risdon anxiously. "You're not going to try to reach her, are you?"

"Yes, I am," replied Jack resolutely. "She's liable to come to her senses any moment, and if she should begin to struggle, as she's likely to, she'll slip out of the tree and go clear to the beach below, which would mean certain death to her."

"But I don't see how you can go down with safety," remonstrated his chum, who felt decidedly nervous at the idea of such a thing on his friend's part.

"You watch me and you'll see."

"Do you really think you can do it?"

"I do."

"But if you should lose your footing," said Risdon with a shudder.

"I'll take care not to."

"You might step on a loose stone."

"I'll test my footing as I go, you may depend."

"I hate to see you risk it."

"Well, I'd risk my life any day for her. I'd despise myself if I didn't try to save her."

"But think of your mother, if you lost your life."

"Don't try to take the nerve out of me, Ed. I've simply got to save Jennie, if it can be done."

"What can I do to help you?"

"Lie flat on the ground at the edge of the cliff so as to reach as low as you dare. Let Granville hold on to your feet, so as to give you a purchase, and trust to my climbing up with Jennie, if it is possible to do it, so that you can reach her at the right moment."

"All right, Jack, trust to me."

Having arranged the preliminaries, Rushton let himself slowly down over the edge of the cliff by the route he had selected with his eye which would, if he was successful, carry him to the roots of the tree.

It was an awful risk he was taking, but it was for Jennie's sake.

Down he went, slowly and deliberately, feeling his way with his toes while he held on carefully to the projecting rocks and the deeply rooted shrubs in his path.

Risdon watched him with his heart in his mouth.

What Granville's feelings were only himself could have told.

Down—down—down, with extreme care and weighing every move with due caution, Jack descended the face of the high cliff until at last he was close to the tree.

He was not a moment too soon, for the girl was beginning to revive.

Planting his feet against the roots of the cedar, Jack reached down and caught Jennie in his arms.

Then he looked up and saw the faces of the two boys above gazing fixedly down at him.

He waved one hand encouragingly at Risdon and waited for the girl to recover.

This she did in a moment or two.

He had braced himself against the cliff, with her head lying on his shoulder.

When she opened her eyes they looked straight into his own.

"Jack," she murmured, an expression of puzzled surprise coming over her pretty features.

"Yes, Jennie."

"Where am I? What has happened?"

"You fell over the cliff, and—"

"I remember," she said, with a shudder, closing her eyes. "Titus Granville forced me over to the edge, the ground gave way, and I fell down—down. Oh, heavens! I thought—"

"Do you mean to say Granville was the cause of your fall?" cried Jack, his breast swelling with indignation and resentment.

"Yes. He was angry with me because I refused to walk with him. He threatened me and I laughed at him. Then he grabbed me by the arms and I recoiled to the very edge. But I was so frightened that I screamed out and struggled to get away. The earth suddenly fell away from under my feet and I slipped out of his grasp. I felt myself falling, then it seemed that everything grew dark, and I remembered nothing more till now. How was I saved?"

"You fell only about eighteen feet into this tree. Had you missed it, you would have gone down to the beach and been killed. Ed Risdon and I were on the cliff and heard you scream. We rushed over and found Granyville, who told us you had fallen over."

Jennie had made no movement to release herself from Jack's arms up to this point.

Now she seemed to recollect herself and blushed vividly.

"Let me go, Jack," she said softly.

"I dare not, Jennie," he answered. "We are in a position of great peril. I climbed down the cliff to this tree to save you, and here we are. I am not certain that I will be able to get you to the top."

The girl at these words woke up to the real facts of the case which she had not taken in before.

She had had the idea that they were on top of the cliff.

That Jack had in some way got her up from the spot to which she had fallen.

She gazed out into the air surrounding them, and then turned her scared face toward her rescuer again.

"Oh, Jack! she shuddered. "What are we to do? I am so frightened."

"Brace up, Jennie. I'll save you somehow. That's what I came down here for."

"And you risked your life for me?" she murmured. "How brave of you, Jack! I shall never forget you as long as I live—never!"

"I would risk my life any time for your sake, Jennie," he said earnestly.

She clung closer to him and buried her head on his shoulder.

"Hello, Jack!" came down Risdon's voice from above. Rushton shifted his position a little and looked up.

"Hello, Ed!" he replied.

"You can't climb up, I'm afraid. Can you hold out there until I run back to the nearest house for help and a rope? It will take half an hour at the best."

"You'd better do it, Ed. It's too risky to try and climb back with Jennie. We can hold out here as long as the tree does, and I guess it's pretty solid."

"All right. I'm off!"

Risdon darted at full speed, leaving Titus Granville alone on the cliff.

That young rascal knew he would be in a peck of trouble the moment the girl communicated the true facts of her desperate peril to her father, and he cudgeled his brain for some plan by which he could avoid the consequences of his folly.

He could not find any way out of his trouble unless through his father's influence, which he believed would protect him.

Jack and Jennie remained in the same position for a matter of ten minutes, and the boy became conscious of a yielding of the roots under their feet.

His heart grew cold with apprehension, and he looked around on the face of the cliff for something to help sustain their weight until help arrived.

There was nothing that would answer the purpose sufficiently.

What were they to do?

If the tree went they were certain to go with it.

The only thing that he saw to do was to climb up a bit, and thus take his own weight from the tree, allowing Jennie to hold on to one of his legs to sustain herself.

The serious question remained, however, whether he could sustain himself, like a fly, against the face of the cliff for any length of time.

Before he could make any move in this direction the question was decided for him by the tree itself.

There was a sudden snap and the tree swung downward, moving in the arc of a circle.

Jennie screamed thrillingly as she grasped Jack tighter, and then both went down like a shot.

CHAPTER III.

IN THE DEPTHS OF THE CLIFF.

Jack threw out his hands instinctively, catching the branches of the tree as he and the girl slipped through them.

He held on like grim death to the limbs, and both of them were swung in under the spot where the roots were imbedded into an indentation in the cliff, where they landed on a sort of shelf that received and sustained them.

For some moments neither moved, then Jack, recovering his nerve and presence of mind, saw that their new position was more secure than their former one had been.

The tree, relieved of their weight, did not give way entirely, but hung by a section of its roots.

They had had a mighty narrow shave for their life, and Granville, who had witnessed their unexpected disappearance, was sure they had both gone down to their death, and with pallid face and shaking limbs, he fled the spot.

"Jack!" gasped Jennie, shaking in every limb. "Where are we now?"

"Safe for the moment, at any rate," he answered.

Then he looked around.

Below them the inrunning tide had completely covered the patch of beach.

Before them was nothing but space, with the broad Atlantic stretched, smiling in the sunlight, to the horizon.

Above them was an arched roof of rock, and behind them was a big hole leading somewhere into the cliff.

"You've saved my life a second time, Jack," said Jennie, looking gratefully into his face.

"I haven't done anything more than I ought to do under the circumstances," he replied.

Then, overcome by a sudden impulse, he took her face between his hands and kissed her.

"Oh, Jack!" she cried, blushing hotly.

"Well, don't I deserve that?" he asked her.

She hid her face on his shoulder again and threw one arm around his neck.

It was evident that there wasn't much objection.

Jack waited till she raised her head.

"There's a big hole behind us leading downward and into the cliff. I wonder where it goes to?"

Jennie turned around and looked into the opening with no little curiosity.

"It looks dark and dismal," she answered. "Maybe it goes way down under the cliff ever so far."

"If it only went to the shore," replied Jack, "I'd see an easy way out of our difficulty when the tide ebbed."

"How are we going to escape from this place?" she asked.

"Ed has gone to get help and a rope. He won't be back for some time yet, for there's no telling where he can get a suitable rope. He may have to go all the way to Seaport for it."

"But, Jack, when he comes back, he'll find us gone and the tree down. He'll think we fell to the beach and were washed away by the sea."

"That's so," replied Rushton, his face taking on a serious look, "I never thought of that. Besides, I doubt if I could reach the rope from this shelf, if it was lowered down the face of the cliff. We're more than a yard back from the direct line that the rope would hang. We can't possibly be seen from above, but we can be seen from the sea. That won't do us any good unless a small boat was to come along close in, and there isn't much chance of such a thing."

"Then what are we to do?" said Jennie anxiously.

"Don't worry. We'll get out of this all right, somehow. We've got a good part of the day before us yet. Let's sit down inside there. It's as cheap as to stand."

Jack stepped over a narrow rocky barrier and led Jennie inside.

A big flat rock offered an easy seat, and they took possession of it.

"This is a lovely place to look at the sea from," said the girl. "I wouldn't mind it a bit being here if I knew how we were to get home safe."

"I've a great mind to explore that hole a little way, to

see where it leads to," said Jack. "You can remain here while I'm poking around."

"I'm afraid to remain alone. You might fall into some hole in the dark, and then I'd never see you any more, and I'd never get away from this place, either."

"Oh, I'll take care of myself," replied Rushton reassuringly.

"No; if you're going deeper into the cliff, I want to go with you."

"Well, you can come, if you insist, but I'd rather you'd stay until I see what the passage amounts to. It may only run in a little way. In fact, I don't see any reason for it going very far."

"I'd rather go, Jack," she said, taking him by the hand.

"All right. As soon as you're rested we'll start."

"I'm ready to go now."

"Come on, then."

They rose and stepped forward into the gloomy and mysterious-looking passage.

Jack got his match safe out and struck a light to see if any treacherous holes or crevasses lay close ahead of them.

When the match flared up they saw that the way was clear as far as the light reached, at any rate.

The passage was about a yard wide, twice that in height, and sloped gently downward.

While the sides and roof were formed of irregular rocks and patches of earth intermingled, the floor was wonderfully smooth, though strewn with small stones and bits of soil.

Soon after they had left the sun-lit opening it grew more rugged, however, and less easy to proceed.

It was cumbered with stones of all sizes, these having evidently fallen from the roof and sides.

The downward slant increased as they went on, and soon became quite steep, winding, or rather shooting, off here and there, after forming a deep and remarkably rounded hollow.

I can't understand how nature ever made such a passage as this, said Jack, after they had stopped and viewed by matchlight one of the peculiar hollows. "If this place was down nearer the sea, I might think that in some way the waves had in the course of hundreds of years eaten their way in here. But that is out of the question, for the opening is more than two hundred feet above the sea level."

They met with a number of the curious hollows, while twice they were brought to a stop by holes a yard or so in depth that appeared in their path.

At the first of these holes, when Jack flared a match Jennie exclaimed:

"We can't go any further. Let us go back."

"Nonsense!" replied the boy. "It isn't deep at all."

To prove his words, he jumped into it, and then she permitted him to swing her across to the other side, where they resumed their downward journey.

The silence and weirdness of that tunnel made Jennie very nervous.

"Suppose the rocks and earth caved in behind us, we'd never be able to return to the opening in the cliff," she remarked apprehensively.

"Pooh! There isn't one chance in a hundred of such a thing happening," laughed Jack.

"Don't you think we'd better go back?" she said.

"What for? I'd like to see this thing out."

"But we've come down an awful way," she protested. "We're going right into the cliff further and further. It's just like being buried alive," she added, with a shudder.

"Can't you trust me, Jennie?"

"Yes, yes; but what's the use of going on?"

"Well, we'll go a little way further, and then we'll turn back."

After going on a short distance they came to a sharp turn and the light of day suddenly flashed into their faces.

It came through a small hole in the cliff side.

Jennie clapped her hands joyfully.

"How good it is to see the light once more!" she exclaimed. "The darkness made me feel frightened."

"You stand still and I'll climb up to that hole, if I can, and see how far down we are. We haven't been going deeper into the cliff, but have been keeping parallel with it. It would be fine if we could find an opening near enough to the shore for us to escape through," said Jack.

"It would, indeed," she replied in a brighter tone.

Rushton found no great difficulty in getting up to where he could support himself while he thrust his head and shoulders out of the opening.

"We've come down about a hundred feet, I should think," he said, turning around and addressing his companion. "We're at a different part of the cliff altogether. There's a line of rocks below around which the sea is eddying. There's no sign of the lighthouse from this spot, but I see a schooner, about a mile out, making for the harbor, and there's another one still further out."

After seeing all there was to be seen, he returned to the girl and suggested that they continue on down, in hope that they might find a chance to get out near the water level. Jennie offered no objection now that she saw that they were not going deep into the bowels of the cliff, so they resumed their way along the passage, which became as dark as ever after they left the opening.

Suddenly a noise, terrifying to the girl, reached their ears.

It sounded afar off, and was like the deep and labored breathing of some large animal.

"What's that?" faltered Jennie, pressing close to her companion and gripping his arm convulsively. "Oh, dear! don't let's go any further."

Jack stopped and listened attentively.

It was certainly a most peculiar and disquieting sound in that heretofore stilly passage.

It came straight up to them from the depths ahead, and Jennie fancied that it was coming nearer every moment.

"Do come back, Jack. I am sure there is some horrid sea monster coming toward us."

At that moment a deeper note, like a long-drawn-out snort, came resounding up the passage, and Jennie uttered a suppressed scream.

"What's coming?" asked Rushton coolly, for he guessed the origin of the noise.

He had an idea that the cliffs were honeycombed with holes and marine caverns, and that the sound was caused by the sea, now at high tide, forcing its way in through, and then receding from, some passage whose top was almost on a level with the water.

The breathing sound was no doubt caused by the forcing of the air back when the water entered, and the snort was produced by a belated expulsion of the air.

Jack proceeded to explain the phenomenon to Jennie, saying that it was ridiculous to imagine that there was such a thing as a sea monster coming toward them along that passage.

The girl was finally convinced that her fears were groundless, and they resumed their walk along the tunnel.

As they proceeded the sound grew louder and louder, showing that they were drawing nearer and nearer to the sea level.

"I wouldn't be surprised but we may be able to get out at that hole whence comes the noise, when the tide is low," said Jack to encourage his companion.

"And will we be able to walk around the foot of the cliffs to the harbor?" she asked.

"I won't say as to that, but I hope so," he answered.

"If we were caught by the next tide, we'd be drowned."

"I don't think so. There are a lot of rocks, the top of which are above high-water mark, on which we could take refuge in case of emergency."

At length they were quite close to the noise, which reverberated in a hollow way through the passage.

A faint, damp, salt odor of seaweed also struck upon their nostrils as a puff of air was suddenly wafted into their faces.

"We're close upon the sea, Jennie," cried Jack.

He struck another match and they saw what appeared to be the end of the long passage within a foot or two of them.

They advanced quickly, and ere the match expired they perceived a vaulted sea cavern before them.

It was floored with hard, smooth, white sand, running upward at a steep angle.

The water, of a deep green color and covered with little flakes of foam, rushed up about two-thirds of the cavern and then retreated again to some distance.

When the water was up the place was dark, when it receded a soft, mellow light permeated the gloom.

This caused the presence of a hole connected with the sea, and through which the water came and went in pulsations as regular as clockwork.

The noise was almost thunderous in the cavern, for it was deflected from the roof and sides.

"I think we'll sit down and take a rest, Jennie," said Jack. "It will be some time yet before the ebb sets in. When it does, this marine cave will gradually get lighter and, the noise will stop."

As Jack squatted in the sand his hand came in contact with a bit of rope.

For want of something better to do, he drew it towards him and found that it measured several yards in length.

"I dare say this place is full of odds and ends of wreckage," he said.

CHAPTER IV.

AT THE SEA LEVEL.

"Oh, Jack, Jack!" she cried beseechingly, "do let's run back. It's coming!"

"I can see piles of wood," said the girl, "heaped all about us."

"It's wonderful what a lot of driftwood finds its way ashore all along the coast. Gracious knows where it all comes from. Once on a time a large part represented the wrecks of vessels, but nowadays there isn't so much of that."

Jennie called his attention to the roof when the pale, soft light suffused the place.

They were fascinated for a time by its appearance.

It seemed to be all in motion—lights and shadows chasing each other, opening, closing and interlacing in the most wonderful way.

"Isn't it beautiful!" cried the girl.

They talked for a while about wonderful marine caverns they had read of, and other things, and then Jack got up and stretched himself.

He walked down to the water's edge to see if the tide had commenced to turn yet.

To the left he noticed a narrow passage, lit by a soft, green light, which came through a low arch.

"Come here, Jennie; I believe there's another and lighter cave next to this."

Entering and passing through the passage, the girl uttered a cry of delight, for before them was another cavern, of ample dimensions, whose low, flattened roof was glorious with a lovely, ever-changing pattern, formed by the reflection of the sunlight from the waves outside.

The cavern ran in for probably a hundred feet, and was so low in spots that Jack could easily touch the roof.

Apparently, from the state of the sand, it was never fully invaded by the highest tides.

Jack and his fair companion could see right out over the Atlantic, which on that day was almost as smooth as a mill pond.

How much of the entrance was covered by the sea, which played among the rocks outside and rippled gently over the sandy floor for a number of yards from the opening, neither could tell, but they judged that the entrance was much wider than it was high.

"This will be just the place to get out at when the tide is low," said Jack, as they sat upon the sand and watched the water advance and retreat near their feet.

"Do you think the water will get low enough to let us out?" asked Jennie dubiously.

"Why not? It drops several feet along this coast," replied Jack.

"But it may be so deep around the entrance that we can't get out."

"I guess I can wade out and carry you, if that is necessary."

"And suppose it's too deep for that?"

"Then we'll try the opening in the cave we just left."

"And suppose we can't escape that way, either," persisted the girl.

"Now suppose you quit imagining hard luck," laughed Jack.

"The tide is going out. It doesn't come up as far as it did when we first sat here."

Jack watched the insweeping water a little while without speaking, and then told Jennie that she was right.

"Say," he said all of a sudden. "Do you know I forgot all about Ed and the rope and help he went to fetch. He

must have got back to the top of the cliff long before this. Then, of course, he saw that the tree was gone over and hanging downward. Naturally he thinks that we took a tumble to the beach, and that we are food for the lobsters in this neighborhood by this time. He'll report the facts in Seaport, and then my mother and your folks will be all broke up."

"Poor papa and mamma," said Jennie, feeling as if she wanted to cry. "They'll feel dreadfully."

"When we get back to town I ought to put it all over Titus Granville for being the cause of all this trouble."

"I mean never to speak to him again as long as I live," said Jennie emphatically.

"That isn't half punishment enough for the rascal. The idea of taking such chances to frighten you into doing what he wanted you to do. Well, he'll hear from me, all right. I don't care if I have a run-in with him over it."

"His father might make trouble for you."

"I don't see what he could do. If I have a scrap with Granville, it will be a fair one, and the fellow that gets whipped will have no cause to complain."

"What's that dark spot over in the corner?" asked Jennie, suddenly changing the topic.

Rushton looked in the direction she pointed.

"Give it up. Want me to go over and see?" he asked.

"It looks like a hole to me."

"I guess that's what it is. I'll take a look."

He got up and walked over to the spot.

It was a hole, beyond a doubt, and he got down on his hands and knees to look into it.

It was large enough to crawl into easily, and something induced Jack to do so.

As it was dark as pitch, he crawled forward with great care.

Suddenly he butted his head against a granite wall.

"I reckon this is as far as I can go," he muttered.

He stretched out his hand to feel about, and found that the tunnel branched off sharply to the left.

In a spirit of adventure, he followed the turn and soon saw light directly ahead.

He crawled on and thrust his head out of the opening.

He found himself looking into still another cave facing on the sea.

But it was not entirely in a state of nature as the others were.

There were lots of signs to show that the place was occupied by somebody, much to Rushton's astonishment.

On a piece of canvas in a secluded corner were bolts of silk and other dress material piled several feet high.

There was also a whole stack of green pasteboard boxes, such as Jack had often seen in drygoods stores.

There was a lot of other stuff in the corner—enough, Jack thought, to start a small store.

The sandy floor, instead of being smooth and sea swept, was covered with footmarks leading from the narrow entrance of the sea inward to where the goods and boxes were piled.

There were also several empty champagne cases strewn about, and a couple of liquor barrels, on the top of one of which stood an unlighted lantern.

The place looked like a storage warehouse on a small scale.

"What the dickens does all this mean?" Rushton asked himself as he gazed around the cave and noted all the various articles it contained.

CHAPTER V.

JACK MAKES A REMARKABLE DISCOVERY.

Finally Jack's curiosity induced him to creep out into the cave and make a closer examination of the place.

His heart beat fast with excitement as he stood in the middle of the cavern, looking around and pretty well taking in at a glance that it was larger and more commodious than the one he had just quitted.

The packages, boxes and other stuff were fenced in, as it were, by a projecting spur of rock, and behind them he was now able to see through the transparent gloom that the place ran back for some distance till flooring and roof met.

Jack walked over and examined the goods.

"All new stuff," he muttered, "just as it came from the makers. What in creation is it stored in this out-of-the-way place for? Who could have brought it here, and why did they do it? I'll bet there's some mystery in this thing. I'd like to discover what it is."

On looking closer at the articles, he noticed a label on some of the packages reading: "Carson & Co., Rockland."

Rockland, as Jack well knew, was a good-sized town a few miles to the north off of Penobscot Bay.

He was not aware, however, that Carson & Co. was a well-known drygoods establishment of that place.

While he was examining the goods a small rowboat, with two smartly dressed men at the oars, was rowed into the mouth of the cave and beached on the sand.

The men sprang out and, securing the painter around a stone, advanced up to the cave toward the spot where the goods were piled.

At the moment, Rushton happened to be standing behind the pile of cloth bolts, and he was unaware of their presence, as they were of his, until he heard their voices close at hand.

He was so startled by their unexpected appearance that instead of immediately showing himself, as under ordinary circumstances he would have done, he stood quite still, as if spellbound.

"When do you think it will be safe to move this stuff?" one of the newcomers asked the other as they stood near the boxes and other merchandise and looked it over.

"Not for a week yet," replied the other. "There are a couple of Portland detectives on the job, and I saw one of them in Seaport this morning."

"It won't do to carry it into Boston. The police are, no doubt, on the watch for the goods there. We must run it into New York by way of the Sound, and land it somewhere along the Harlem River, after we have made arrangements for its disposal through some auction house. While we're here we ought to scrape these labels off the boxes."

"Yes. They've got to come off before the goods are sent to a salesroom."

"We ought to make a good haul out of this job, Damon," said the man who had spoken first.

"There isn't any doubt of it. These bolts of silk are of the finest quality and should fetch a good figure."

"It was lucky that we discovered this cave and landed all the swag here or we should have been in jail now."

"Right you are. The Seaport authorities must have got word early to be on the lookout for any strange craft putting in there, for we hadn't been more than an hour at anchor before the cops boarded us with a search warrant. If the stuff had been in the hold, it would have been all day with us. Our carefulness in removing every scrap of evidence saved our bacon. This cave may be known to some of the fishermen, but I doubt if the detectives would dream that the stolen goods are hidden here, even if they learned of the existence of the place."

The two men sauntered down to the boat, lit a cigar each, and seated themselves on the gunwhale, where they continued to converse.

Jack could no longer hear what they said, but he had heard enough to convince himself that all the goods in the cave were the proceeds of a robbery committed by the two well-dressed men, no doubt at Rockland.

"It is probably lucky for me that they did not notice my presence here or there might have been something doing I wouldn't like. I hope they won't take it into their heads to come back again and look the stuff over closer, for in that case they would certainly get on to me, and I could hardly stand off the two of them. I wonder how long they mean to remain here. Jennie will be getting nervous over my absence. She won't know but something has happened to me. If I don't return to her soon she is bound to grow worried and frightened. But I can't make my way over to that hole while these men are here. They'd notice me right away, and would nab me before I could get out of their reach. Even if I eluded their grasp, they'd follow me into the other cave. No, I'll have to remain quiet until they take to their boat."

Ten or fifteen minutes passed away and the men continued to talk and smoke.

Apparently they were in no hurry to make a move.

"I wish they'd go," muttered Rushton impatiently. "I want to go back to Jennie. The tide is going out fast, too, and it will soon be low enough for us to start along the foot of the cliffs toward the harbor. It must be getting on toward one o'clock, and I'm beginning to feel hungry. Then our folks have probably got word from Ed by this time about the trouble that overtook us, and goodness knows how they are feeling about it. Mother will be simply wild, and it may take hours before we can get back and let all know we're safe and sound."

It was awfully tiresome to stand doing nothing behind that pile of goods, not knowing what might happen next, and certain that by this time Jennie was wildly anxious over his absence.

But Jack didn't see how he could help himself.

His only course was to make the best of the situation.

In the meantime the wind had risen into a stiffish breeze and now ruffled the face of the Atlantic with numberless whitecaps.

The water which had hitherto ebbed and flowed so calmly

into the caves came dashing into them with some power, though receding gradually as the tide got lower and lower.

As Jack awoke to the fact of the changed conditions he realized that their projected trip over the rocks and patches of sand along the base of the huge cliff would be attended with much inconvenience, if not actual danger.

Besides, there was no certainty that they would be able to reach the harbor by that precarious route.

They might be cut off at a dozen places by breaks in the rocks and sandy shore—a by no means improbable contingency, for he did not know the exact conformation of the base of the cliffs, never having been that way in his life.

At the best it looked like a dangerous venture, only to be undertaken because there was no other way of escaping from their unfortunate predicament.

As Jack believed their only chance lay while the tide was at its lowest point, he grew nervous and frightfully impatient as time slipped away and the two men remained idly smoking alongside their boat.

Several times he was on the point of showing himself and chancing the consequences, but he held back, fearful that that might spoil everything.

He did not think so much of himself as of Jennie.

He was her only protector and stand-by in this emergency, and he could not afford to place her in a more desperate situation than she already was in.

At this stage of the game he suddenly heard the girl's voice calling to him in accents that showed she had grown frightened at his belated return.

From the nearness of the sound it struck Jack that she had crawled part of the way into the narrow tunnel.

"Jack! Oh, Jack! Where are you?" she cried.

"My goodness! They'll hear her as sure as thunder!" he breathed.

He looked around the pile of goods and the spur of rock to see if they had taken notice.

They had not as yet, for the splashing of the water against the rocks drowned the hail in their ears.

"Jack! Jack! Oh, Jack!" came again from Jennie, who seemed to be working her way through the tunnel.

"She's coming through the hole after me," palpitated Rushton nervously. "The moment she sticks her head out at this end she'll see them and they'll see her. Then the fat will be in the fire and there'll be trouble to burn."

In a few minutes Jennie cried out again.

She was nearly through the tunnel and her hail was heard by the two men.

They satrted to their feet in consternation and listened.

"What was that, Morris?" asked the man named Damon.

"Give it up. Sounded like a woman's voice calling somewhere up in the cave."

"It can't be. There's no one here but ourselves."

"Well, you heard it, didn't you, as plain as I did?"

"Hello! What's that yonder? Something is coming out under the rock through that hole. What the deuce is it?"

They gazed with astonished and staring eyes, and as Jennie turned her face towards them they saw that it was a girl's countenance.

"Jack, are you there?" she asked, crawling completely out and getting on her feet.

The two rascals were astounded.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ESCAPE.

As she began to advance toward the two men they started toward her.

Then she saw they were strangers and stopped.

"Hello, young lady, what brought you here?" demanded Damon, not over-politely.

"I came after Jack," answered Jennie. "Have you seen him?"

"Jack! What Jack?"

"Jack Rushton. He's a boy."

"There isn't any boy here," replied Morris.

Nevertheless he looked around the cave suspiciously.

"He must be here somewhere. He crawled through that hole half an hour ago."

"Oh, he did," said Damon. "Take a look around, Morris. Maybe he's hiding behind those bolts of cloth. How did you and this Jack get down under this cliff?"

"We came down through a long tunnel from near the top of the cliff."

Damon stared at her.

Her statement seemed incredible to him.

"Is that hole the end of the tunnel?" he asked her.

"No. There are two other caves, smaller than this, on the other side of that wall through which that hole runs."

This was news to Damon, but then he was not much acquainted with the cliffs—the sum total of his knowledge was concentrated in this cavern.

The entrance to the next cave he had seen, but took it for a shallow hole in the cliff into which the sea eddied at high tide.

Further conversation with the girl was interrupted by an exclamation from his companion, as Jack, finding that he was sure to be discovered, jumped into view.

Morris, with an imprecation, made a grab at him; but Rushton eluded him and ran over to Jennie.

"Oh, Jack!" she cried joyfully. "Where have you been all this time?"

Rushton did not answer her, as his attention was wholly centered on the two men, wondering what action they would take.

They didn't leave him long in doubt.

"Grab him, Damon!" cried Morris.

Damon attempted to, but met with no better success than his partner in guilt.

Jack dodged him and, reaching Jennie, seized her by the arm and ran her down to the boat.

"Why, Jack!" she cried, greatly astonished by the proceedings. "What is the matter?"

"Jump into the boat, quick!" he exclaimed, as a sudden plan of escape occurred to his mind.

He half-lifted the surprised girl in and then picked up pieces of stone and began firing them at the rascals as they came rushing at him.

His aim was pretty accurate, and they stopped to dodge the missiles.

One of the stones hit Damon on the side of the face and drew blood.

Another narrowly missed Morris's head.

As Jack was in dead earnest he had them guessing where the next projectile would land.

As soon as he had thrown them into a momentary confusion the boy turned around and cast the boat's painter off the rock.

Then, putting his shoulder to the bows, he shoved the light boat into the water.

The rascals perceiving his object, came at him with cries of rage in an effort to head him off.

They missed their mark by a hair, for as the boat floated out at the mouth of the cavern Jack followed it into the water and then sprang on board.

Seizing an oar, he pushed it down into the water and shoved off out of the rascals' reach.

His maneuver had been entirely successful, and what was eminently satisfactory, he had secured a boat with which they could reach the harbor and the town beyond without facing the uncertain difficulties and dangers of the base of the cliffs.

Jennie, of course, couldn't understand the unusual situation.

The efforts of the two men to pounce on her companion had been plain to her, but why they wanted to catch him was a profound mystery to her.

She could not help feeling that something was amiss.

Her satisfaction at being once more with Jack, about whom she had been much worried during the greater part of the last half hour, overcame all other considerations.

The men stood at the entrance of the cavern in wrathful discomfiture, shaking their fists at Rushton.

As a matter of course, he paid not the slightest attention to them, and a moment later the strong current that ran along the base of the cliffs whisked the craft and its occupants out of their sight.

Jack was not much of a boatman, notwithstanding that he had lived the greater part of his life within sight of the sea.

The water had no great attractions for him except as viewed from the shore.

However, he thought, as he got out the other oar, that any one could handle a rowboat, and he proceeded to propel his little craft along.

He soon found, however, that it was not as easy as he had calculated on.

While the drift of the tide was off-shore, the counter attraction of the swirling currents among the rocks bothered him not a little.

Then, as his back was to the bow, he couldn't see where he was going, and before he knew where he was the boat slid up on a smooth submerged rock and nearly spilled himself and Jennie into the sea.

The girl uttered a little scream and held on tightly to the gunwhales with both hands.

The boat hung for a moment bow on to the rock and then slid off into deep water, where the current whisked her stern around and bumped it against another rock.

"Oh, dear! Where are you going to, Jack?" she asked, somewhat frightened.

Then she gave another scream, for a wave striking the rock deluged her with spray.

The freshening breeze and the novelty of his occupation bothered the boy not a little.

He was becoming conscious of the fact that he had tackled a job that was going to give him a whole lot of trouble.

He was also conscious that he was not showing up very well in the eyes of his pretty passenger, and this didn't improve his feelings.

He found that his way was literally strewn with dangers in the shape of sharp rocks, a collision with any one of which was liable to send the boat to the bottom.

What he should have done was to have headed directly out to sea until he got well out beyond the bristling perils of cliff navigation.

Then he would have had a clear course before him.

Jack's inexperience at boating told greatly against him in this emergency.

Being out of his element, he felt more or less like a fool, notwithstanding the splendid courage and nerve with which he was gifted.

The current swung the boat around another rock, which scraped her gunwhale and would have injured one of Jennie's hands if she hadn't snatched it away just in time.

Jack ceased attempting to row and, taking one of the oars, devoted his energies to keeping the boat off the rocks as she was carried along close in shore.

Fortunately, the trend of the current was toward the mouth of the little harbor, though sometimes they were swept back over a small portion of the course they had come.

They soon approached a projecting spur of the cliff which looked rather dangerous in the boy's eyes.

"Oh, Jack, we're going ashore!" cried Jennie, as the boat was swept close in toward the rock.

Rushton made no reply, but poised his oar, ready to fend off.

When within a few yards of the cliff the current branched off around the spur, making a sweep that carried them not only clear of it, but many yards out into clear water.

Jack immediately took advantage of that to get both oars into the water and resume rowing.

"There's the lighthouse, Jack," exclaimed the girl, as Goblin Light came into view ahead.

That was good news to the boy, who knew that they were not far from the mouth of the harbor.

Better even than that was the fact that they had been swept clear of the rocks and some little distance out from the cliffs.

"Oh, Jack, look, look!" cried Jennie suddenly. "There are a lot of people on the top of the cliff. There's the hanging tree away up there, and the hole through which we entered the cliff must be right behind it, though I cannot see it. That's where I fell and you climbed down to save me. The people must have come there to look at the spot where we have been reported to have fallen down."

Rushton stopped rowing and looked over his shoulder in the direction indicated by the girl.

Sure enough, there was a dozen or more figures 250 feet up in the air standing around at the very spot where Titus Granville had caused all the trouble.

Whether Ed Risdon was one of them, Jack couldn't make out at that distance.

"We'd better wave our arms at them," said Jack. "Maybe we can make them understand who we are."

He stopped rowing and, making a funnel of his two hands, shouted upward.

Then he and Jennie gesticulated with their arms.

The attention of the people above was soon attracted to them, but though Jack and Jennie were well known in Seaport, the distance was too great for their features to be recognized, and the observers above thought them just a boy and girl out rowing, though no doubt they considered that the young people had taken long chances going outside the harbor in such a small boat.

"There's some more people at the foot of the cliff," said Jennie presently. "I guess they're looking for us."

"Then I'm going to row in and let them know we're safe."

Accordingly Rushton altered the boat's head and pulled in shore.

There were several fishermen and others walking about.

A sailboat in which they had evidently come from town was moored close to a strip of sandy beach.

The approach of the rowboat was observed, but the searchers at the base of the cliff supposed it contained two young persons drawn there by curiosity.

Jennie's sharp eyes soon singled out her father, Squire Norris, the chief lawyer and a justice of the peace of Seaport.

"There's my father" she screamed. "Father, father!" she cried, waving her two arms eagerly.

In another moment or two the girl was recognized by her almost distracted parent, and he dashed down to the water's edge in his eagerness to clasp her in his arms.

It was as if she had come back to him from the dead, so sure had he been that his child had gone to destruction down the cliff.

"Father, father!" again exclaimed Jennie, half rising in the boat as it was pulled in to the strip of beach by Jack's lusty strokes.

Squire Norris dashed into the water and grabbed Jennie in his arms.

"My child! My dear little girl! How did you escape?"

"Jack saved me," she said, clinging around his neck.

"Jack, my lad," said the squire, his voice husky with emotion, grasping the boy by the hand as he stood in the bow of the boat, "how did you save my Jennie?"

"By holding on to her and clinging to the tree till it landed us on a shelf under a projecting rock."

"But how did you get down? And this boat, how did you come by it?"

"That's too long a story to tell you here, sir. If you will come back with us, Jennie will tell you all about it."

"Not in that boat. You'll sail back with us in the sloop. Come, my men, let us return to town at once. There is nothing now to detain us here, for, thank Heaven, both my child and her brave young rescuer are safe and uninjured."

The men gave a cheer to testify to their satisfaction over the unlooked-for result, and as soon as all were on board the sailing vessel, and the rowboat secured to her stern, she put off and steered for the mouth of the harbor.

CHAPTER VII.

JACK REACHES HOME.

There was great joy on Squire Norris's face as he held Jennie close to him and, with all hands aboard, listened

to Jack Rushton's recital of his own and Jennie's hair-breadth escape from a terrible death, and their subsequent escape from the ledge far up the cliff through the unsuspected tunnel to the caves down on the sea line.

"Dern my picter!" exclaimed the grizzled owner of the sailboat, "whoever knowed before that there was an inside to that there cliff."

"It's a narrow, sloping tunnel," said Jack. "How it came to be there is most astonishing, but I'm not going to worry myself about the matter. It carried Jennie and me down to the shore, and that's enough, I guess."

"And where did you find the rowboat?" asked Squire Norris.

"That's another story, sir. It belongs to a couple of rascally thieves who have robbed some store in Rockland, I guess, for they've got a whole lot of stuff hidden in one of the caves."

The squire instantly pricked up his ears.

"They must be the men, then, who robbed Carson & Co.'s drygoods store three nights ago."

"That was the name I saw on several labels attached to a number of flat, green boxes piled up next to a lot of bolts of stuff that looked like silk."

"There's no doubt but that is the stolen property. Are the thieves in the cave now, do you know?"

"They are. We had a narrow escape from them."

"You say this rowboat is theirs. They must have a larger craft, too. Is it down there?"

"No, sir. I think it must be in the harbor. They intended to carry the goods to New York City and sell them there. I overheard them talking about the matter."

"Do you think they can escape without the rowboat?"

"They may reach town by walking along the base of the cliffs at the present state of the tide, just as Jennie and I calculated on doing."

"It can't be did," interjected the owner of the sloop, "not at no stage of the tide. There's places that can't be crossed unless you swim, and that's dangerous in the current that sweeps along there."

"Then they're trapped," said Squire Norris. "That will be good news for the police who are on the lookout for the rascals. Carson & Co. have offered \$500 reward for information leading to the capture of the burglars and the recovery of their property. I think you will be entitled to that. At any rate, I'll see that a claim is put in for it in your interest as soon as the men are caught and the goods brought to town."

"I wouldn't mind making \$500," laughed Jack. "It would come in quite handy about this time."

"I have no doubt but it will be awarded to you," replied Squire Norris.

"Do you know if Ed Risdon carried the news of my supposed death to my mother?" asked Jack.

"No. I told him not to go near your mother. That I would break the news to her myself if it was found past all doubt that you and Jennie were dead."

"Thank you, sir. I hope she hasn't learned the news from any of the neighbors. It would only cause her needless suffering."

As soon as the sloop touched her wharf Jack sprang ashore, and bidding Jennie and her father good-by he started for his home as fast as he could cover the ground.

When he rushed into the house he found several women present and his mother almost frantic.

It was just as he had feared. Some of the gossiping neighbors had heard the news, and of course the very first thing they did was to rush in and condole with Mrs. Rushton over the presumed death of Jack.

The appearance of Jack altered the whole complexion of matters.

His mother screamed and threw her arms around him.

"They told me you had fallen from the cliff with Jennie Norris," sobbed Mrs. Rushton, clinging to him.

"They told you a heap more than they ought to have done," replied Jack, gazing angrily at the assembled women who were now waiting for a chance to tender their congratulations. "The old cats!" he muttered to himself.

The ladies, however, were not a bit abashed.

They jabbered together excitedly, and then chipped in with their congratulatory remarks as soon as Mrs. Rushton had recovered her composure.

After that the whole crowd hastened away to tell the wonderful news of Jack and Jennie's escape.

"Thank goodness they're gone, mother. I've no patience with those gabblers. If they hadn't waddled in here like birds of ill-omen you would not have suffered such a cruel shock."

Jack then drew his chair close to his mother, and, taking her hand in his, told her the particulars of his and Jennie's adventures on, in, and below the cliffs.

She shuddered as he described his descent to the tree in the girl's behalf, and gasped when he told her how the tree had given away under them.

"The shelf saved us, mother. Only that it was there, I'd hate to think what would have happened to us. However, a miss is as good as a mile any day, though it doesn't feel as good, by a long shot."

While they were talking, Ed Risdon rushed into the cottage.

"Gee, old man! I never was so happy in my life as when I heard that you and Jennie had escaped that awful drop," he cried, seizing his chum by the hand and giving it a hearty shake.

"You ain't any happier than I am to have got out of that adventure with a whole skin. We had a narrow squeak, as I was just telling mother—about one chance in a thousand. Say, what became of Titus Granville?"

"Give it up. He wasn't on the cliff when I got back with a rope and two men to help draw you and Jennie up, as we supposed we'd have to do. But, oh lor'! when we saw that tree hanging down by the roots and no sign of either of you, my heart almost stopped beating. There seemed to be no doubt but that you and Jennie had fallen to the beach and been washed away by the tide. I never felt so bad in my life."

"I'll bet when Jennie tells the facts to her father, he'll make a bee-line for the bank to see Titus's father."

"I'm thinking it won't do much good. Old man Granville thinks the sun, moon and stars rise and set around his son. I'll bet he won't do a thing to him."

"Well, if he had the right kind of father, he would get a good thrashing."

"Come now, Jack, tell me how you escaped when the tree

went down," said Ed, eager to learn the particulars of the thrilling conclusion of the cliff incident.

"You'd never guess what happened to us after you left for help if you lived to be a thousand years old," replied Rushton. "Draw up your chair, and I'll go over the story again for your benefit."

Risdon was intensely interested in his chum's account of that tunnel down the interior of the cliff.

"Gee! I'd like to have been with you," he exclaimed.

"You only think you would, Ed. You wouldn't have taken that drop with the tree, even if you'd known there was a shelf ready at hand to catch you, which we didn't know till we landed on it, for all the tunnel adventures in the world."

"Well, I don't think I would," admitted Risdon.

When Jack described the caves, Ed declared that he meant to go there some day in a boat and look them over.

Then Rushton finished up with his discovery of the stolen goods piled up in the third and larger cavern, the encounter with the two crooks, and finally their escape in the rowboat, and the hard time he had had to avoid floundering on the rocks along the base of the cliffs.

"If I'd been with you we might have captured those chaps between us," said Ed.

"We might, and then again they might have captured us. However, they'll be caught all right by the police. They can't get away, to save their lives, without a boat of some kind, and I don't know where they're going to get one."

"Your name and Jennie's will be in the paper now. You'll have a reporter up here before dark interviewing you."

"Let him come. I'll treat him white," laughed Jack. "By the way, mother, how about something to eat. It's three o'clock, and I haven't had a bite since breakfast."

"You're dinner is in the oven, keeping warm," replied his mother.

"Is it? Glory halleluyah! I'll soon make short work of it. Come and watch me eat, Ed. I suppose you've had your dinner?"

"I had a hasty bite at home, but I was so excited over your fate that I didn't fill up to any extent."

"Then I'll divide with you."

"No, I'm not hungry. If I eat anything now it will spoil my appetite for supper, and I don't want to do that for we're going to have my favorite dish to-night on the table, and I want to be able to eat hearty."

"What's your favorite dish?"

"Pig's trotters," grinned Ed, following Jack into the kitchen, where Mrs. Rushton had preceded them to dish up her son's dinner for him.

CHAPTER VIII

BENT ON MISCHIEF.

Sure enough, a reporter was up to the cottage to see Jack long before dark.

The boy gave him all the particulars, and next morning's paper had a graphic story of Jack and Jennie's adventure.

It also stated that the two crooks had been captured by the Seaport officers and delivered to the Rockland authorities.

The stolen goods were also in possession of the police.

That day Squire Norris presented Jack with a handsome gold watch and chain, to which Jennie added a pretty charm.

Rushton was very proud of the two presents, and attached them to his vest without delay.

He had never been able to sport anything better than a silver watch that had belonged to his dead father, and had always envied Risdon's natty gold one.

Now Ed's looked like thirty cents beside his own.

He was working away on his project for increasing the reflecting capacity of the lighthouse lamps when Risdon walked into his workshop—a good-sized room on the ground floor back of the kitchen.

"Well, how are you getting on, old man?" asked Ed, lounging up against the bench on which stood the uncompleted framework intended to hold half a dozen prisms.

"Slowly," replied Rushton.

"Is that the beginning of your lighthouse scheme?" asked Ed curiously.

"That's it. What does it look like?"

"Half a dozen frames hinged together. What are you going to fill the spaces with?"

"Prisms."

"Where are you going to get them?"

"At a certain shop in Boston that manufacture the best in the country. If I get that \$500 reward that the Squire says I'm entitled to, I shall have no difficulty in getting the improved style I want. The secret of my invention is in the arrangement of these prisms, not in the prisms themselves."

"I see," replied Ed vaguely, for he didn't understand at all, nor did Jack expect him to.

"The light on Coffin Rock, like all other lighthouses, is backed by reflectors, but they do not throw out a strong enough light on foggy nights."

"Not when the fog is of the pea-soup kind," chuckled Risdon, remembering the words of the skipper of the three-masted schooner Sarah Richardson, that went ashore and became a total loss on a certain morning because he couldn't make out the light on Coffin Rock.

"Now, my idea is to surround the lamp with glasses, after a plan I have in my mind. I am so satisfied with the result that as soon as I get the thing in working order I'm going to get permission to try the effect of my invention in the lantern of the Coffin Rock on a clear night and then on a foggy one. The thicker the mist the better it will suit me."

"But how are you going to tell unless you go out into the fog in a boat and note the difference in the beams cast by the regulation light and those sent out with the aid of your glasses?"

"The effect can be noted on the fog bank itself."

"How?"

"I'll take you with me as my assistant and let you see for yourself."

"How much will this thing cost you to put it on the experiment basis?"

"A good part of that \$500."

"And if you make good, the government will adopt it?"

"I see no reason why the lighthouse board should not accept the improvement."

"I've heard that it requires a strong pull to get anything accepted by the government, no matter how good it is."

"Oh, I guess there are exceptions," replied Jack, reaching for a tool.

Rushton and Risdon had a listener to their conversation, though they were not aware of the fact.

This interloper was none other than Titus Granville.

He had seen Ed Risdon enter the yard of the Rushton cottage, and noticing that he did not come out again, he concluded that Rushton was at home.

He knew that Jack spent a good part of his spare time in his little workshop back of the kitchen, constructing the various devices that originated in his brain.

He did not believe that they amounted to much in spite of the praises bestowed upon them by the privileged few who had been at various times admitted to the workshop.

But for all that he was curious about the matter.

He wanted to find out what kind of things Jack had made and was making at odd moments.

Not being on good terms with Rushton, he could not expect to be invited to inspect the various models.

He meant to see them just the same, if he could get around it in any safe way.

Several times he had sneaked into the yard and peered through the window in front of Jack's work bench when he knew Rushton was away, but he had only seen enough to excite his curiosity still more.

How to get into the shop without Jack finding the fact out bothered him not a little.

On the afternoon in question he had the nerve to follow Risdon into the yard and creep up under the workshop window, where he judged from the sounds he heard that Jack was at work.

His original idea had been to watch what Rushton was doing through the window, but he found that he couldn't do this without running great danger of being seen.

As the window was raised a couple of inches he contented himself with standing close under it and straining his ears to catch what the two boys were talking about inside.

He had no difficulty in hearing all Jack said about his new scheme for making the light of the lighthouse lamp brighter.

Once when Rushton left the bench to get something at the other side of the room, Titus took a hasty glance in at the window and saw the framework that Jack was working on.

Although he had no very great opinion of Jack's ability as an inventor, yet in this instance Rushton's confident talk inspired him with the idea that perhaps there was something in his scheme after all, and the very idea that Jack might turn out something that promised to prove a practical success aroused his jealousy and envy to an intense degree.

He hated Jack for many reasons, the chief of which was Rushton's intimate relationship with pretty Jennie Norris, whom Titus secretly admired and wished to monopolize.

He had done everything in his power to win Jennie away from Jack, but failed to make a favorable impression on that young lady.

He could not understand why she should prefer the society of a comparatively poor boy to his own.

His father was by long odds the richest man in Seaport, and he was the best-dressed young fellow in town and moved in the best circle of its society, but those facts made no impression whatever on the girl, much to his disgust.

The incident of the previous morning on the cliffs, when he had completely lost his temper and endeavored to browbeat the girl, eventually causing her to nearly lose her life, had settled him with her forever, and he knew it after the climax had opened his eyes to his reckless attitude toward her.

It only served to intensify his animosity toward Jack, especially as the town was now ringing with praises for Rushton's gallant rescue.

His vindictive little soul reached out for some means of getting square with Jack, if only to gratify his spite.

While he listened under the window his thoughts naturally followed the bent of his inclinations, and he decided that he couldn't get in a more effective blow against Rushton than by destroying his lighthouse invention if by any means whatever he could manage to do it.

"If I only can get into the shop while he is away, I'd make short work of the old thing, I'll bet. I hate him! He's only a common boy, anyway, and ought to know his place, but he's always trying to push himself forward; trying to make people think that he's something better than he was born to be. I despise such persons. My father is a gentleman, and of course I'm one. We're rich, as we ought to be, and everybody in town looks up to us as the most important people in the place. Why shouldn't they, when my father is president of the leading bank, and the chief member of the Town Council, and my mother is the social leader, and president of the Foreign Missionary Society, and a lot of other things besides? If it wasn't that Rushton's father had his life insured in two companies when he died, the family would be on the road to the poorhouse. His mother ought to have put him to work in some store long ago instead of sending him to the High School, which is only intended for gentlemen's sons who expect to hold good positions in life. What does a common boy want with a High School education? What good will it ever do Jack Rushton? Bah! Some people make me sick with the airs they try to put on. However, I'll put a spoke in some of his crazy schemes, and I'll just begin with this lighthouse arrangement of his. I don't believe it would ever amount to a hill of beans, but for fear it might give him a boost, I'll see if I can't put it out of business."

With this charitable purpose in view, Titus began to consider how he could gain a surreptitious entrance into the shop.

"I'll hang around until Rushton and his crony, Ed Risdon, go off together. I know Rushton has promised to meet Jennie Norris at five o'clock, and that hour isn't a great way off. When he starts for her house, Risdon will probably go home. Rushton's mother is spending the afternoon at the Lloyd house, down the street, so the coast will be clear for me. I won't do a thing to that workshop when I get inside," he chuckled gleefully. "He'll never find out who played ducks and drakes with his models. He'll never suspect me. If he does, I guess I'll be able to work in an alibi. Jim Edwards will be willing to swear I was out

fishing with him all the afternoon. I'd like to see Rushton's face when he looks at the wreck of his shop. Oh, my! He'll look happy, I don't think!"

There was a small summer house at the end of the yard which Jack's father, who had been a carpenter, built shortly before his death, and to this shelter Granville retired to wait for the two boys to leave the shop and vicinity.

CHAPTER IX.

VENTING HIS SPITE.

All unconscious that a vindictive enemy was hovering around the place bent on destroying his most cherished invention, Jack drew his new watch out of his pocket and looked at it to see how late it was.

"Hello!" exclaimed Risdon, in surprise. "Where did you get that, Jack?"

"That," replied Rushton, "is a present from Squire and Mrs. Norris, in recognition of my having saved Jennie from probable death. The charm on the chain is a present from Jennie herself. What do you think of them?"

"They're the finest in town. That watch knocks the spots out of mine," said Ed, taking his time-piece out of his pocket, "and mine isn't a half bad one. Yours outshines Titus Granville's by several degrees. He'll turn green with envy if he ever gets a sight of it."

"Don't mention him, please. I'm dead sore on him for putting Jennie's life in peril yesterday. If she hadn't made me promise to avoid him, I believe I'd knock the daylights out of him for what he did to her."

"His father might have you arrested for assault if you did anything like that, so it's just as well that you let him alone."

"I'd be willing to chance that," replied Jack. "Well, it's quarter to five. I have an engagement with Jennie at five, so I'm going to lock up."

A few minutes later the boys left the workshop, Jack locking the door and putting the key in his pocket.

Titus Granville, from his hiding place in the summer house, watched them walk out of the yard and part at the gate.

After waiting a good five minutes, to make sure that Rushton had got well on his way to the Norris home, Titus came out of the summer house, walked over to the shop and tried the window.

Jack, however, had taken the precaution to shut it down and fasten it.

Granville was disappointed, as he had confidently counted on effecting an entrance by way of the window.

He knew the door was fast, for he had seen Jack lock it, so it looked as if his amiable intentions were blocked for the present.

"I wonder what the beggar wanted to lock the window for? Is he afraid somebody might break into his old shop? I hate to let him stump me in this way. Then I might not get such an easy chance again for some time. His mother isn't often away when he is. If I could only get in it wouldn't take me more than fifteen minutes to make his shop look as if it had been struck by a western cyclone."

He began to consider the matter of breaking the window. The fact that this method might attract the attention of the neighbors deterred him.

Then he wondered if he could force the lock of the door.

He took out his knife and fooled with the lock a few minutes, then gave it up as impracticable.

The next thing he did was to walk around to the side of the building and take a general observation.

He noticed that a weather strip covering the crack between two boards was loose.

He tore it away.

"I'll bet I could pry a couple of the boards loose at the bottom if I had anything to do it with."

He looked around the yard and saw a crowbar leaning against an apple tree.

"That will be just the thing," he said, going over and getting it.

Inserting the sharp curved point between the crack he had opened up, he soon worked the bottom of one of the boards loose.

Then he attacked the other board.

It didn't take him long to force that also.

The crowbar then loosened them where they were nailed to a thick cross-piece about five feet from the ground.

Now all that held them were the nails at the top.

Titus tossed the crowbar aside and, seizing each board in turn, pulled them to one side, thus making a hole large enough for him to creep through into the unfinished room.

"I've made the rifle at last," he said, in a tone of great satisfaction, as he gazed around the workshop. "So this is his den," he added. "It looks like a regular carpenter shop. Those tools must all have belonged to his father. It's a pity he doesn't chop a finger or two off when he's using them. Some boys would, I bet a hat. What a lot of models he's got—a whole shelf full of them. And what is that thing beside the bench?"

Titus went close to it and looked at it critically.

"It's some kind of a mill which you work by hand."

Granville grabbed the handle of the crank and began to turn it.

That imparted motion to some kind of machinery inside that he couldn't see, and also caused a large and a small wheel on the outside at one end, attached by a narrow belt, to revolve.

Titus looked into an upright square funnel set into the top of the box containing the machinery while he continued to turn the crank.

"This is where you put some kind of stuff in to be ground, I suppose," he said.

He looked around for something to drop in.

First he put in several handfuls of shavings and then turned the crank.

They slipped down and finally disappeared within.

He half expected that they would demoralize the machinery inside, but they appeared to have no effect.

Then he dumped in the contents of a bottle of varnish and turned the handle.

"I guess its vitals needs a bath," he grinned wickedly. "A little sawdust will mix well with the varnish," he chuckled. "When it dries the machinery will be on the blink, I hope."

So he dropped a small pan full of sawdust into the mill, and turned the handle a while with fiendish delight.

Finally he got tired of monkeying with the mill, over which he had lost a good quarter of an hour without knowing it.

Then he examined the shop pretty thoroughly.

He was attracted by the pretty model of a Dutch windmill.

Jack had built it for Jennie as a working ornament to put outside her window.

When the wind blew the big sails would revolve, and it would look like an old-fashioned windmill in motion.

He had taken a great deal of care with its construction, and was rather proud of it as a sample of his workmanship.

He had applied the final coat of varnish to it that morning, and placed the model on one of the shelves to dry.

Titus looked at it with greedy eyes.

"I'd like to own that," he said to himself. "I guess I'll carry it off. He will never find out that it is at my house. If he should, I'll say that I bought it from a tramp, and he'll think it was the tramp who broke in here."

He removed the mill from the shelf and put it on a box near the hole where he had come in.

"I guess I'd better lose no more time," he said, "but start in and make matchwood out of these other models. Where's that lighthouse arrangement. I'll start in with that. I guess that's the most important."

In the meantime Jack Rushton had walked over to the Norris house, a very pretty but not elaborate two-story and attic dwelling setting back from the shady street in the center of a well-kept lawn.

Jennie was standing on the veranda waiting for him.

She ran down the gravelled walk to meet him the moment she saw him entering at the front gate.

"I'm not more than a minute behind time," he said, bringing out his watch to prove it. "I'm ever so much obliged to your father and mother for giving me this watch," he added. "And I can't thank you enough for that handsome charm."

"Not a word," she said, putting her fingers on his lips. "The obligation is all on our side. You deserve a million dollars for saving my life. Papa, of course, didn't feel like offering you money for what you did, for it would look like trying to pay you for a service that is beyond all price."

"I should never have accepted a cent," replied Jack stoutly. "I didn't risk my life for money, but for your sake. You know that, don't you?"

"Yes," she replied softly, with a heightened color. "You know I feel very, very grateful to you, Jack."

"I don't doubt it. I am perfectly satisfied if you will always like me just as much as you can."

"I always will."

"That's a promise, is it?"

"Yes," she answered, casting down her eyes.

"That's all I want to know. By the way, that Dutch windmill I made for you is all finished. I put the last coat of varnish on it this morning, and it must be nearly dry by this time."

"Oh, how I'd like to see it," she cried delightedly.

"I'll fetch it over some time to-morrow."

"Let me go over with you now and look at it. Supper

won't be ready for half an hour, and we'll just have time to go to your house and back. I do want to see the windmill right away."

"Can't you wait till to-morrow?" he asked, with a smile.

"No," she said, with a little, imperious shake of her golden head, "I want to look at it right away."

"Little girls shouldn't insist on having their own way," laughed Jack.

"Why not? I'm not a little girl, anyway. I'm a young lady," she answered archly.

"I don't know as I ought to let you boss me around."

"I'm not bossing you. I only want——"

"To see the windmill right away?"

She nodded.

"Well, I suppose I'll have to humor you. Maybe it's dry, and we can bring it back with us and fix it up outside your window."

"That will be lovely. Come, let's go."

So they started off together as happy as could be.

What they said to each other on the way to Jack's home doesn't concern this story, for it simply interested them alone.

At length they reached the cottage gate and entered.

"Mother went over to call at Mrs. Lloyd's and to take tea there, for she knew I was going to supper at your house," said Jack, as he closed the gate.

Then they walked across the yard to the rear of the cottage, where Jack's workshop was.

As they drew near the closed door, Rushton was astonished to hear sounds proceeding from the inside of the shop.

They sounded like the smashing of wood.

"What does that mean?" he ejaculated. "There's no one in there; at least, there ought not to be."

Smash! Crash! Smash!

"Why, there is some one inside, working or doing something," said Jennie.

"My gracious!" cried Rushton, as he thought of his lighthouse framework and other models, and began to suspect the presence of an interloper bent on mischief. "Somebody is there who has no right to be there."

He quickly inserted the key in the lock and threw open the door.

In a moment he recognized the intruder as Titus Granville, his enemy, who was in the act of completing the destruction of his lighthouse framework.

The greater part of the article lay in ruins on the floor, and only one blow more was needed to finish the remainder.

"Hold!" cried Jack, dashing in at the door, followed by Jennie Norris. "What in thunder are you doing, Titus Granville?"

The young rascal paused with hatchet uplifted, gave a startled glance at the newcomers, then turned and fled.

He had no thought now for the windmill model he had intended to carry away.

His only idea was to escape the wrath of the young inventor.

He hustled through the opening in the side of the building in such a reckless way that he tore his jacket half off his back.

At any rate, he left a big section of his garment behind

him hanging to a nail, and made off over the back fence as fast as he could go.

CHAPTER X.

JACK MAKES THINGS HOT FOR TITUS GRANVILLE.

Jack gazed at the wreck of his lighthouse frame with feelings that can better be imagined than described.

The work of many weeks had been ruthlessly destroyed in a few minutes by the malicious son of the richest man in Seaport.

If Rushton could have laid his hands on Titus Granville at that moment, Titus would have received a whipping he wouldn't have forgotten for a month.

No doubt it was the fear of such a handling that had hastened his departure.

Jennie looked on in speechless astonishment.

She, too, had recognized Granville, and had witnessed his undignified flight.

She easily guessed that he had been up to some mischief, but she did not know the extent of it until Jack turned to her, and, with almost quivering lips, told her that Titus had totally ruined his lighthouse frame.

Then she knew the loss that had fallen on the young inventor.

Her first feeling was one of righteous indignation, shown by the flush on her face and flash in her eyes.

Then, when she saw Jack struggling to keep back the tears that glistened on his eyelids, an intense sympathy rose in her heart for the boy she thought the world of.

"Don't feel bad, Jack," she said, going to him and twining her arms around his neck in an affectionate way. "It's a cruel shame, I know. It only shows what a mean and contemptible boy Titus Granville is. Brace up, Jack, and be the man that I know you are. You can make a new frame. You can make it quicker and better than the old one, for you know just how to do it now. I know you feel dreadfully. I feel bad myself, because I sympathize with you. Kiss me, Jack, and promise that you will show Titus Granville that he can't down you, no matter how well he thinks he has succeeded."

Rushton felt encouraged by her words and, putting his arms around her, he took advantage of her permission to kiss her twice.

"Thank you for your sympathy and encouragement, Jennie. I will make a new frame, for I'm determined to succeed in the scheme I have in view. Titus has only put off the day of trial. I would feel a great deal worse but for your sweet words, little girl. I intend to deserve your good opinion always. You are just like a dear sister to me."

"And you are like a dear brother to me," she replied, laying her head on his shoulder.

"We'll always be brother and sister, won't we?"

"Yes—always."

"That is, until——"

"Until what?"

"Until you find somebody one of these days who you may learn to like better than me," he said wistfully.

"I'll never learn to like anybody better than you, Jack," she replied earnestly.

"Never is a long day, Jennie."

"I mean it. I love you, Jack, and I don't care who knows it."

"Do you really?" he cried gladly. "Do you really love me?"

"Yes."

"With all your heart?"

"Yes, with all my heart."

"And I love you, Jennie, with all my heart."

"Do you, Jack?" she asked softly.

"Yes, I swear it."

Then he kissed her again and held her in his arms for several minutes before he released her.

At that moment his thought turned to the Dutch windmill.

"Great Scott!" he exclaimed aghast. "It's gone!"

"What's gone, Jack?"

"Your windmill. That rascal must have smashed it, too. Say, I won't do a thing to him," added Rushton, with a resolute air. "I'll go to his house and knock the toplights off him. I might have stood the loss of the lighthouse frame, but your windmill is the last straw. I have no time to make another, and I tried so hard to make it strong and pretty for your sake. Blame him! I'll make him look like a lopsided kangaroo when I get hold of him. I'm going over now to put it all over him right away on his own grounds. I don't care if he had fifty fathers who were fifty times as rich and as important as his father is."

Jack was mad clean through, and he looked it.

"No, Jack, you mustn't—why, there's the windmill now, on that box, isn't it?" she cried, running over to where Titus had left the model.

Jack followed her over, and a thrill of satisfaction ran through his veins.

"Yes, so it is," he answered, taking it up and looking it over to make sure that it had not been injured. "It's all right. I dare say he intended to break it after he had finished with the lighthouse frame. We reached here just in time to save it."

"Isn't it pretty!" she cried, jumping up and down. "Aren't you good to me, Jack?"

"There is nothing too good for you, Jennie—nothing in the whole world."

"Except yourself," she replied archly.

"No, not even me."

"You'll postpone going over to Titus Granville's until after supper, won't you, Jack, now that the windmill is all right?" she asked roguishly.

"Oh, yes; but he'll have to pay the piper for the damage he did to my lighthouse frame. Come over and see where the rascal forced an entrance. I can have him arrested for breaking into our house. He may find that this is no laughing matter before I'm through with him."

"What's that piece of cloth hanging on the nail?" asked Jennie.

Jack picked it off.

"It's a big piece of his jacket, with a pocket attached. He must look like a wreck going home that way," and Jack grinned in spite of himself. "Hello, here's his pocketbook. Let's see what's in it."

Rushton opened it and found two \$10 bills, and a lot of silver coin.

"He carried quite a bit of spending money around with him," he said. "Well, that with the torn piece of jacket will be pretty good evidence against him if I should want to use it. With our joint testimony on top of it, I think Titus Granville would find himself in a pretty bad box. I must nail those boards up again that he loosened and then we'll go over to your house to supper."

As soon as he had made his workshop secure again, Jack picked up the windmill, and then he and Jennie started for the Norris home.

At the supper table Jack told Squire Norris how he and Jennie had caught Titus Granville in his workshop demolishing his lighthouse invention, and asked for his advice as to how he ought to treat the young rascal.

After what Titus had done to Jennie on the cliffs, Squire Norris was not very favorably disposed toward the son of the Seaport banker.

"He needs a severe lesson to teach him a little common sense," said the Squire. "He committed a very serious offence in breaking into your house, for the shop is a part of your cottage. I advise you to call at my office in the morning and I will go with you before Magistrate Howard. You can swear out a warrant charging him with felonious entry of your shop and malicious mischief. He will be arrested and held for examination. There is evidence enough to hold him for trial and to convict him when he's tried."

Accordingly, next morning Jack appeared before Magistrate Howard, and on his statement a warrant was issued for Titus Granville's arrest and handed to an officer to serve.

Titus was arrested at his home, and his mother and the servants were thrown into the greatest consternation.

The boy was badly scared, while his mother tried to buy the policeman off.

When this was found to be impossible, word was at once sent to Mr. Granville, who had just gone to the bank, while Titus was marched off to the station house.

The banker hastened around to see the magistrate before he went to court.

He found he could do nothing, as the charge was too serious.

Then he called at Mrs. Rushton's cottage, to try and arrange matters with her son, but Jack was not there, and so his visit was unproductive.

He was greatly worried over the matter and returned to find the court in session.

Jack, Jennie and Squire Norris were in the room.

Banker Granville went to them at once and tried to square matters, but with no success, as Jack was very angry over the destruction of his lighthouse frame.

"Your son has made a dead set at me ever since we knew each other. This outrage in my shop is only the culmination of his hatred. It will take some time for me to make that framework over again. He ought to be severely punished for destroying the one I had almost finished."

"I am willing to pay you handsomely if you'll withdraw the charge—I'll give you \$1,000."

Jack refused.

The banker was in a cold sweat, for he saw there was sufficient evidence against his son to hold him for trial.

Finally he offered Jack \$5,000 in cash to let up on Titus.

"No, sir; you haven't money enough to buy me off," replied Rushton, "but I'll tell you what I'll do. If your son will apologize to me for his conduct and promise to keep away from me in the future, and if you will pay me \$100, to cover my loss of time and the materials destroyed, I'll withdraw the charge."

The banker eagerly accepted his offer.

Titus was obliged to apologize publicly in court, and it was a terrible ordeal for him to undergo, but it was as nothing compared to the disgrace he escaped through Jack's magnanimity.

After the matter was all settled, Titus was sent to Boston to visit friends, and it was hoped that when he returned to Seaport those who knew would have forgotten all about the disgraceful incident.

No account of it appeared in the papers, as the banker succeeded in suppressing it through a liberal donation to the treasury of each newspaper.

Whether the lesson Titus got would be a lasting one or not was yet to be demonstrated by his subsequent conduct.

CHAPTER XI.

WHAT JACK FOUND IN THE CHIMNEY.

Jack and Jennie were summoned to Rockland to appear against Damon and Morris, the crooks who had robbed Carson & Co.'s drygoods store, and the rascals were held for trial at the next term of the court.

Mr. Carson then sent Jack his check for the \$500 reward.

Ed Risdon came into Jack's workshop that afternoon as he was clearing away the ruins of his lighthouse frame.

He had already heard about the damage done by Titus Granville, and of his subsequent arrest in connection with the outrage.

"What are you going to do now, Jack?" he asked.

"Make a new frame."

"That will take time. You were too easy with Titus."

"I gave him a good scare, at any rate, and compelled him to make a public apology to me in court. That broke his heart."

"Served him right. He won't hear the last of it soon from the boys."

"I hope it has taught him a lesson."

"You can't tell. If I'm any judge of his character, he'll be down on you worse than ever."

"Let him. As long as he keeps clear of me, he can hate me as much as he chooses. He won't dare play any more tricks on me, for he can easily see that I won't stand any nonsense of that sort."

"His father must have been wild."

"He was. He offered me \$1,000 at first, and then \$5,000, to drop the case."

"He did?"

"He did. And I've no doubt he'd have made it \$10,000 if I hadn't told him that he couldn't buy me off at any price."

"But you did withdraw the charge."

"I know it. I didn't care to bring disgrace on the Gran-

ville family, but I didn't sell out to them. I let Titus off for \$100 damages and the apology."

"Did the banker thank you?"

"He did. He said he appreciated my forbearance and consideration, and that if I ever wanted a favor to call on him."

"He'll forget all about it now that his son is out of the scrape."

"That doesn't worry me any. I did what I thought to be the right thing."

"I see the windmill is gone. Did you give it to Jennie?"

"Yes. That would have gone to smash if Jennie and I hadn't reached here when we did. Titus had it down from the shelf."

"He's a vicious little rascal."

Jack nodded.

"What are you going to do with this machine you've had standing here for the last three months?" asked Ed, pointing to the mill that Titus had first monkeyed with.

"Nothing at present."

"It's finished, isn't it?"

"Yes. One of these days I may get it patented, and build the real thing."

Ed went over to it and started to turn the crank, but it wouldn't budge.

"What's the matter with it? Broken?"

"No. Turn the handle and you'll see it will work."

"I'm trying to turn it, but it won't move."

Jack looked surprised and tried it himself, with no result.

"That's funny!" he remarked. "It has always worked easy. There is nothing to prevent it from revolving."

"It doesn't seem to work, just the same."

Jack looked into the funnel and saw streaks of mingled varnish and sawdust.

"I believe that young rascal put it out of business," he said angrily.

He saw the empty varnish bottle lying on the end of the bench.

"He poured varnish down here and threw sawdust on top of it so as to gum it up."

"He did?" replied Risdon. "Well, if he isn't the limit! You'll have to take it apart now and clean the insides."

"That's what I'll have to do. I wonder how much more damage he did in the shop?"

He started in to examine his other models, and found that they had not been touched.

"That and the windmill and the lighthouse framework seems to be all he handled, thank goodness! Fortunately, the windmill escaped. I think I'd have broken his head if he had destroyed that."

"Too bad that you didn't give him a good licking on top of the apology. You ought to have put that in the arrangement."

Jack got his tools and removed the whole top from the mill, and then the mess made by Granville was apparent.

"All those cogs and rollers will have to come apart and be cleaned," said the young inventor.

"Can I help you?" asked Risdon.

"You can if you want to undertake a dirty job."

"I'll do it to help you out."

"Thanks, Ed."

He pulled the machinery to pieces and then furnished his chum with a rag, some turpentine, and a piece of sandpaper.

"Now you can go ahead," he said.

Ed took off his jacket, rolled up his sleeves and started in, while Jack began getting out the wood to make a new framework for his latest invention.

The boys talked as they worked, and in the course of an hour Risdon had cleaned away all evidences of Granville's mischief.

Jack then put the mill together again, and when the top had been restored it worked as good as ever it did.

Soon afterward Mrs. Rushton appeared at the door to call her son to dinner.

Jack invited Ed to remain and eat with him and Risdon consented.

"Let's go fishing this afternoon," said Ed, while they were at the table.

Rushton said he thought he ought to make some headway on his invention, as he was anxious to secure a trial of it as soon as he could.

"Oh, you can work on it to-morrow," said Ed. "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy."

Jack finally consented to go after he had done an hour's work.

They returned to the shop and at about half-past two started for a certain creek on the suburbs of Seaport with their fishing tackle.

The afternoon was a cloudy one, and well suited for the sport.

They had fished with good results for an hour when it started to rain.

"We'd better get under cover until it stops," suggested Risdon.

"I guess so," replied Jack.

They wound up their lines, grabbed their baskets, and retreated to a one-story hut with an attic, which stood near by and had been long abandoned as a dwelling house.

The boys put their baskets and tackle in a corner and stood by the door watching the rain as it came down faster and faster outside.

There was nothing in the ground floor of the hut to attract their attention, as it was quite bare of everything except dirt and refuse.

"Ever been in this old shack before?" asked Risdon.

"I've looked in at the door, that's all."

"Then you wasn't up in the garret?"

"No. It must be a pretty dirty hole."

"Let's go up and see what it looks like?"

"What's the use? There's nothing to see."

"How do you know there isn't?"

"I imagine there isn't from the looks of this floor. What could there be up there worth taking the trouble of climbing the steps in the corner?"

"We might as well satisfy our curiosity, as we've nothing else to do until the rain stops."

"You mean your curiosity," laughed Jack. "You're the one who's anxious to go up there. I haven't a particle of interest in the attic."

"All right. Let it go at that."

They walked over to the steps and went up.

"Well, how do you like it now you're here?" asked Jack.

"I can't say that I fancy it," replied Risdon, looking around the peaked ceiling festooned with heavy, dirty bunches of cobwebs.

There was an open window in the front and another in the rear.

A couple of boxes stood on either side of an opening in the floor that penetrated clear to the room below.

Under the dull rainy sky it looked gloomy and forbidding enough.

"Shall we carry these boxes downstairs for seats or use them here for the little while we expect to stay?"

"We'll sit down here by the window," replied Jack, turning one of the boxes over on its side.

Risdon followed his example.

"I've heard that this old rookery is haunted," said Ed.

"Haunted! I never heard that it was."

"Well, you know the old miser who lived here was found murdered one morning."

"That was a long time ago. I suppose he was killed for the money he was said to have had concealed about the place."

"He may not have had any. At any rate, none was found here, though the building was searched all over for it."

"The person or persons who killed him probably got away with it."

"Well, it's said his ghost has been seen here. Do you believe in ghosts?"

"I've never thought much on the subject. There may be such things."

"Joe King was passing this way two weeks ago, and he says he saw a light shining through the back window of this attic."

"A tramp or two might have been roosting up here at the time."

At that moment a strange noise came from a shadowy part of the room where the brick chimney rose through the floor and pierced the roof.

"What's that?" asked Ed, looking around nervously.

"A noise of some kind."

They listened, but nothing was to be heard but the heavy patterning of the rain on the roof.

"It was a funny kind of a sound, don't you think?"

"Yes, it was kind of odd."

"What do you suppose caused it?"

"How should I know?"

The boys resumed their conversation, but Risdon took care to say nothing more on the subject of ghosts.

They were talking about the caves under the cliffs where Jack and Jennie had been in that morning when the peculiar noise sounded once more, louder than before.

"There it is again."

"I heard it. Why don't you go over and see what makes it?"

"No, thanks."

"What are you afraid of?" chuckled Jack.

"Who said I was afraid of anything? Why don't you go over?"

"I will if it bothers us again," replied Rushton coolly.

"Maybe it's the wind blowing down the chimney."

"There isn't any wind to speak of."

"Then there are rats in the chimney."

"Rats make a scampering or scratching noise. That sounded like—"

A sudden repetition of the singular noise cut him short. It was like nothing so much as a sepulchral groan.

At least, that's the way it struck Ed, and he didn't like it for a cent.

The previous evening he had been reading a book of true ghost stories collected by the Psychical Research Society, several of which were so weird as to give him a touch of the horrors.

He now recalled some of these creepy incidents, and as the surroundings fitted in well with the atmosphere of the stories he began to feel creepy himself.

"I think we'd better adjourn to downstairs, Jack," he said, rising from his box.

"Just as you say, but I'm going to see what makes that noise first."

"I wouldn't bother with it."

At that juncture the noise was repeated, and then something fell with a clatter on the floor near the chimney.

Risdon gave a start and made a break for the steps.

He was half way down before he noticed that Rushton was not at his heels.

Jack hadn't been disturbed by ghost stories and didn't have much faith in spooks, anyway.

He walked deliberately over to the gloomy part of the attic where the chimney stood and struck a match.

He saw that a brick had fallen out of the chimney, leaving a hole.

Two more bricks looked to be loose, and Jack easily pulled them out, dropping them on the floor.

Just then the odd noise sounded full in his face, and before he could form any idea as to what it was, something darted out and struck him a blow in the face.

It was followed by a second something that whizzed by his ear.

His hand was grasping a brick at the bottom of the hole at the moment, and the suddenness and sharpness of the blow from the unseen object caused him to start back.

Half the bricks of the chimney seemed to give way and fall clattering at his feet.

"Whew! What have I struck?" ejaculated Jack.

Ed stood on the stairs, half paralyzed.

He didn't know what to make of the racket.

Finally he yelled to Rushton, asking what was the matter.

Receiving no reply, he cautiously went back till half his body was above the attic floor, then something flew at him out of the darkness and hit him a smart blow on the forehead.

He gave a yell, lost his balance, and slid down the steps on his back.

Just at that moment Jack flashed a match, which illuminated the big break in the chimney.

He saw a shelf right before him in the yawning gulf, and on the shelf stood six sooty-looking bags.

His curiosity induced him to reach out and grab the nearest.

It was heavy, and as he drew it to him it struck on the bricks and gave out a clinking sound.

The match expired in his fingers and he lit another.

"Gracious" he exclaimed. "This feels and sounds like money."

As he spoke a dark object struck his hand, the one holding the bag.

It dropped at his feet and fluttered around with a strange noise.

Jack stooped down with the match and looked at it.

"Why, it's a bat," he said. "That's what flew out of the chimney and hit me in the face."

As he looked at it the bat recovered and flew away, and he could hear it circling the attic.

With the aid of another match he took the other five bags off the shelf and carried them over to the rear window.

Making a slit in one of them with his penknife, out rolled a couple of bright ten dollar gold pieces.

"My goodness! It is money, and gold at that. Is this the miser's hoard?"

CHAPTER XII.

JACK ASTONISHES HIS MOTHER.

Jack gazed in a bewildered way at the bags and the two golden coins.

He inserted his finger in the slit and fished out three more gold pieces.

"There's a thousand dollars in this bag if there's a cent," he said. "As all the bags are about the same size, that would mean that I've found \$6,000. Gracious! What a find! Ed will have a fit when he sees the money. I wonder where he is? I thought I heard him give a yell a few moments ago. He's got ghosts on the brain to-day," chuckled Jack. "If it hadn't been for that curious noise made by those bats in the chimney, I'd never have found this treasure trove. I guess this must have belonged to the murdered miser. He kept it in the chimney and the murderers never thought of looking there for it. Well, as he can't have any further use for it, and it would be pretty hard to find his heirs, if he had any, I guess the money belongs to me as the discoverer. Won't mother be astonished? We'll be able to put on a little style now. On the whole, perhaps I'd better say nothing to Ed about this money. I'll go down, get my fish basket, and put the stuff in it. It seems to have stopped raining, so we'll make a line for home."

Jack immediately went down to the first floor.

Ed was standing near the door, examining his torn jacket, and didn't notice him.

Rushton picked up his basket, dumped his fish into Ed's, and returned to the attic.

In a few minutes he came down again, with his basket in his hand.

It felt heavier than if it had been full of fish.

He walked up to his chum.

"Ready to go home?" he asked.

"Hello!" said Ed. "What kept you upstairs? Did you see the ghost?"

"What's the matter with your jacket?" asked Jack, observing that it was rumpled and torn.

"I fell down the steps."

"The dickens you did! How came you to do that?"

"I went up to see what was keeping you, when something flew at me, hit me on the head, and down I went."

Jack laughed.

"Why, that was a bat."

"A bat? How do you know it was a bat?"

"Because one of them hit me in the face and afterward on the hand. What did you think it was—a ghost?"

Risdon looked foolish and made no reply.

He put on his jacket and then went and got his basket.

He did not notice that it was heavier than before with the added fish, and the boys left the shanty.

"Was it the bats that made that strange noise?" asked Ed, after they had gone a short distance.

"That's what it was. They were in the chimney. I pulled several bricks out, and the plaguy things flew out in my face."

"Several bricks!" cried Ed, recollecting the noise he had heard. "Why, I thought it was raining bricks."

"That was when part of the chimney fell out."

"What made it fall out?"

"I accidentally pulled them down," said Jack, changing his basket to his other hand.

"One would think that basket was heavy, the way you're carrying it."

"So it is. I've got part of the chimney in it," grinned Rushton.

Ed supposed he was joking so he made no reply.

In a short time they parted at the nearest corner to Jack's house.

"Mother," said Jack, when he entered the kitchen, "come upstairs to my room. I want to show you something."

"Won't it do after tea? Everything is ready to go on the table."

"All right. I'll be down in a moment."

"Did you catch any fish?"

"A few, but Ed has the whole batch in his basket. I've got something better in mine. Something that will make you open your eyes very wide."

"You mean you have a surprise for me?"

"Yes; the biggest surprise of your life."

"You excite my curiosity."

"Well, after supper you'll see what you'll see," replied Jack laughingly, as he walked away.

He carried the basket with its precious contents to his room.

There he took the bags out, dusted the soot off them, and stood them in a row on a small table.

Then he tidied himself up and went down to supper.

"Now, mother," said Jack, after the meal, "follow me." They went to his room.

"Take a chair, mother, and I'll tell you my story first."

He narrated his and Ed's experience in the old shanty into which they had been forced to take shelter from the rain.

Then he told her about his remarkable discovery of the six bags of gold in the chimney.

"Is it possible" she exclaimed.

"Behold the evidence, mother," and he showed her the bags.

Then he opened each one in turn and poured its glitter-

ing contents in a heap on the table until six heaps of golden coin confronted her astonished eyes.

"Now I'm going to count it to see how much it is."

The coins were all \$10 gold pieces, and Jack counted them in piles of ten each.

"There's one thousand dollars," he said, after he had laid out ten piles.

The total amount footed up \$6,230.

"Quite a windfall, mother, don't you think?"

"Are you sure that we ought to keep all this money, Jack?"

"Keep it? Why not? I am pretty sure it belonged to the old miser. He had no known relatives. His body was never claimed. Consequently, the money rightfully belongs to me as the finder. Ed doesn't know that I found the money, and I thought I wouldn't tell him. In fact, there is no use telling anybody. I'll take it up to Boston to-morrow and deposit it in several of the savings banks there. The odd \$230 you'd better keep yourself, mother."

Next morning Jack carried the money to Boston and deposited it in several of the best savings banks of the city.

Then he visited the big optical manufacturer and ordered a certain number of high-grade prisms to be made for him, specifying the size he desired them to be.

The manufacturer promised to have them ready at the time desired, and Rushton, after paying a deposit on the work, took the train back to Seaport.

Next morning Risdon came in to see him right after breakfast.

"So you were in Boston yesterday, eh?" he said.

"I was."

"If you'd told me you were going I could have arranged to have gone with you."

"My visit was wholly one of business," replied Jack. "I ordered the glasses for my new lighthouse frame."

"Oh, that's what took you there."

Jack made no reply, but left his chum to infer what he pleased.

"Say, Jack," he said a moment later.

"What is it?"

"Do you know, when I opened my fishing basket after I got home from our fishing excursion, I found twice as many fish in it as I supposed I had caught."

"Is that so?" chuckled Rushton.

"I've been puzzled ever since to account for it. Say, you didn't put your fish into my basket, did you?"

"Do you know of any reason why I should have done so?"

"No, I don't. But I could swear that I only caught half as many fish as I found in my basket. How many did you catch?"

"I don't remember—probably six."

"It seemed to me that was about what I caught, but I found eleven."

"Well, as long as you didn't miss any, you ought to be satisfied."

"I'm blessed if I can figure out how I caught eleven," persisted Ed.

"Then don't try to do it. It isn't worth while."

"You're working on the new frame, aren't you?"

"Yes."

"Anything I can do to help the good work along?"

"Do you think you could plane those boards down perfectly smooth?"

"Sure I could."

"Well, you can take hold and try; but be sure you do it right, now."

"You can keep your eye on me and see that I do the work right."

The two boys worked quite steadily all morning and accomplished a great deal.

"You wouldn't make such a bad amateur carpenter," said Jack, when they knocked off for dinner.

"If I worked under you for a month or two I guess I'd be able to build a house."

"What kind of a house? A dog house?" grinned Jack.

"Oh, you get out! Trying to guy me?"

"You don't imagine that either of us could build a real house, do you?"

"We might be able to put up a barn," compromised Ed.

"You're coming in to have a bite with me, of course?"

"Say, do you want to make a regular boarder of me? I'm going home."

"Nonsense! You've earned a sight more than your grub this morning. Come on."

So Ed was persuaded to remain and have dinner with his friend.

After the meal they returned to the shop, and were about to resume work when a couple of visitors popped in on them.

The callers were Jennie Norris and her particular friend, Ada Lewis.

CHAPTER XIII.

ATTACKED ON THE ISLAND.

"Good afternoon, boys," said Jennie, as the two girls appeared at the door. "May we come in?"

"Sure thing," answered Jack, grabbing the one chair in the shop and bringing it forward. "Take a seat, Miss Lewis. I'll get a chair for you in a moment, Jennie," he added, rushing out and presently bringing in one of the kitchen chairs. "You'll have to excuse our lack of style here, but you see it's my workshop."

"Oh, don't mind us," interjected Miss Lewis laughingly. "We'd just as soon sit on boxes as not."

"Yes, we're very democratic," said Jennie. "What are you two working at now?"

"Trying to recover lost ground. Ed is helping me to pull out on my new lighthouse invention," replied Jack.

"Then I suppose there is no use of our asking you boys to go with us this afternoon?" she said, in a tone of some disappointment.

"Where were you going?"

"Ada's brother-in-law, Mr. Fish, has come over from Portland in his yacht, and has invited us to take a sail to Rockland and back this afternoon. We came over to see if you would go with us. And we supposed you could hunt up your friend Ed."

"Ed doesn't need to be hunted up as he's on the spot ready for anything in the shape of fun that turns up. What do you say, Ed? I suppose we'll have to shut down and

oblige the ladies. It isn't often that two such fascinating girls take the trouble to go out of their way to invite us on an outing."

"Thank you, Jack Rushton," said Miss Lewis, "you said that very nicely. We feel quite repaid for coming."

"Don't mention it. I didn't say more than the truth."

"That's right," nodded Risdon, who thought Ada Lewis the nicest girl in Seaport, "I second the statement, and you know I wouldn't jolly you for a farm."

Ada smiled and said she'd take his word for it.

"You've got quite a shop, Mr. Rushton," she added. "It looks full of business. I heard pa say you are one of the cleverest boys in Seaport."

"I'm much obliged to your father for saying so," replied Jack. "I hope I deserve his good opinion."

The girls being ready, Jack locked the shop up, and he and Ed, taking their respective partners, started for the Lewis home, where Mr. Fish was waiting for them.

The entire party then walked down to one of the wharves.

The yacht was lying only a short distance away, and its owner signalled for a boat to take them off.

In a short time the handsome craft was heading out of the harbor, under her mainsail and jib.

"This is just too lovely for anything," cried Ada, as the boat swept along under the influence of a lively breeze that played hide-and-seek among her brown curls.

"Isn't it," said Jennie. "Aren't you glad you came?" she added to Jack.

"Of course. I never like to miss a good thing."

"By the way, Rushton," put in Mr. Fish, "you were the cause of the arrest of those two crooks who robbed Carson's drygoods store in Rockland, weren't you?"

"Yes, sir. I ran off with their boat the morning that Jennie and I had our stirring adventure on and in the cliffs, and they couldn't get away from the cave without it. All the police had to do was to go around there and nab them."

"So I read in the Portland papers. Well, I suppose you haven't heard the latest news about them?"

"No; what is it?"

"They broke jail in Rockland this morning and the detectives are out trying to recapture them."

"Is that so?" answered Jack, much surprised.

"Yes. I saw the news posted up on the Seaport 'Times' bulletin board a couple of hours ago."

"I hope they'll be caught. You don't know how they managed to make their escape, do you?"

"No. The evening edition of the paper will probably publish the particulars."

"They must be uncommonly clever rascals to be able to get out of the jail."

"That goes without saying. They'll have to be just as clever to avoid being retaken, for their descriptions have no doubt long since been telegraphed in every direction."

"As they appear to understand the management of a boat, it is more than likely they'll try to get away from Rockland in one, if they haven't already done so."

"If they have done that they stand a chance of getting clean off," said Mr. Fish. "It would be hard to track them by water, and the rascals could land anywhere they chose along the coast."

The yacht was now sailing among a group of green

islands of various sizes off the coast, and the attention of the party was attracted to them.

"That island yonder would be a fine place for a picnic," said Risdon, pointing to one close at hand.

"Wouldn't it?" exclaimed Ada. "Couldn't you put in there and let us go ashore a little while, Harry?" she asked her brother-in-law.

"I dare say I could manage it, if you people are very desirous of taking a stroll about the place."

Accordingly, Mr. Fish gave orders to bring the yacht to off the lee of a cove that offered a good landing spot.

The boat was lowered and, with a man to handle the oars, the four young people got into her and were put ashore.

Mr. Fish had told them that he would send the boat back for them in twenty minutes, and he expected they would be ready to re-embark.

"Which way shall we go, now that we're here?" asked Jack.

"I think we'd better walk straight ahead," replied Ada. "It won't take us long to reach the other side of the island."

So straight ahead they started to cross the small island, which was completely covered with trees and shrubbery.

Walking was easy over the velvety green grass, where pretty wild flowers grew in great profusion.

"I smell smoke," said Ed suddenly.

"Smoke?" exclaimed Jack. "Now you mention it, I think I do, too."

"There must be others on the island besides ourselves," said Ed.

"Maybe a fishing party that came ashore to cook some of their catch, or a mess of clams," suggested Rushton.

As they drew nearer the opposite side of the island the smell of cooking became plainer.

Presently through the trees they saw the forms of two men bending over a small fire with which they were busy.

"I guess we'd better not butt in," said Ed, and so the party made a detour around the opening where the strangers were, and soon came out near the shore washed by the sparkling waters of the Atlantic.

Here they saw a good-sized catboat lying in a small cove attached to a tree by a line from the bows.

"That's the craft that brought the men here," remarked Jack. "The Water Witch, of Rockland," pointing to the words on her stern.

"Looks like a good boat," said Risdon, who was something of an amateur boatman, and believed he could tell a smart craft when he saw one.

"If I was a boy I think I'd like nothing better than to go off fishing with a party of chums in just such a boat, and afterward land on an island like this and help cook our dinner in a sort of go-as-you-please fashion," laughed Ada. "Fish tastes so much better when cooked right out of the water. I tell you, Jennie, we girls miss a whole lot of the pleasures of life. We can't go off and enjoy ourselves like boys. We can't do lots of things boys can do."

"I'm satisfied to be a girl," replied Miss Norris, glancing at Jack.

"And I'm mighty glad you are a girl," said Rushton emphatically.

"Well, let's go back," spoke up Risdon.

They turned around and had gone perhaps twenty feet into the shrubbery when they suddenly came face to face

with the two men who had been cooking a meal over the fire.

To Ed and Ada there was nothing out of the ordinary about the men, and they kept on their way.

It was different with Jack and Jennie.

To them this unexpected encounter was rather startling, for they recognized the pair as the thieves that they had met in the cave, and against whom they had afterward appeared in the Rockland court room.

And the rascals knew them both in an instant, and their faces showed it.

As thought actuated by the same impulse, both sprang at Rushton and seized him.

"So we've got you, young man, have we?" hissed Damon roughly. "You did us up, and now we'll do you up for buttin' in where you had no right to."

Jennie screamed, but instead of running away, she jumped, like the brave little girl she was, to the rescue of her young sweetheart, and commenced to pound the nearest man, who happened to be Morris, in the face with her fists.

"You little vixen, what's the matter with you?" snarled Morris, partly releasing his hold on the struggling boy to defend himself against Jennie's blows.

"Let him go! Let him go!" she cried.

On hearing Jennie's scream, Ed and Ada had turned around.

They were astonished at seeing the struggle that was going on between the men and their companions.

Ed at once started to help his chum.

Damon saw him coming and, whipping a revolver out of his pocket, pointed it at him in a threatening way.

"Sheer off, now! If you interfere, I'll put a bullet into your hide."

This brought Ed to an irresolute standstill, for the man's eye showed that he meant business.

The next moment Damon reversed the weapon and struck Jack on the head with it just as he had almost shaken himself free from his enemies.

The boy staggered and fell to the grass.

Jennie screamed again and rushed to him.

"Grab her and carry her aboard the boat," commanded Damon.

At that moment Ed made a sudden rush at him.

The pistol exploded harmlessly, but the rascal was equal to the emergency.

He struck Ed a terrible blow in the face with his fist and stretched him dazed on the ground.

Then, grabbing Jack in his arms, he dragged them down to the cove, with Ada's screams ringing in his ears as she ran to Risdon and stooped beside him.

The men lost no time in getting their two prisoners on board the boat, unmooring her from the tree, and making sail away from the island.

Ed recovered his faculties just in time to see the vessel round the corner of a projecting point and head off to the southwest.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE STERN CHASE.

Jennie had kicked and struggled with considerable effect as Morris bore her to the boat and stepped on board with her.

He carried her into the little cabin and threw her down on one of the lockers. Then he went out and helped his companion yank Jack into the cabin likewise.

They slammed the hinged doors to, shutting in their prisoners, and turned the key in the lock.

"They're safe enough now," said Damon, with a short laugh. "Come, let us get away from this island without delay."

Sail was made in a hurry and the catboat was soon gliding across the surface of the ocean at a lively rate.

In the meantime Ed Risdon was gazing after the retreating boat.

"Oh, Ed, what shall we do? Those men have carried Jennie and Jack Rushton off in their boat," said Ada, in great distress.

"The only thing we can do is to get back to the other end of the island, board Mr. Fish's yacht, and tell him what has happened."

They hurried across the island to the cove, where they found the boat waiting.

Mr. Fish had sent the boat ashore the moment he heard the report of the revolver, which had greatly astonished him, and he was now standing near the yacht's wheel, looking anxiously at the island and wondering what had happened.

He was surprised to see only his sister-in-law and Risdon come down to the boat and get in, and then saw his man push off without waiting for the others.

"Where is Rushton and Miss Norris?" he shouted across the water.

"Attacked by two men and carried off in a catboat," returned Ed, making a funnel of his hands.

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Fish, aghast, for he heard the boy's explanation plainly.

The rowboat was soon alongside and Ed sprang aboard.

Leaving the sailor to assist Ada on deck, he ran aft to where Mr. Fish was.

To him he hurried explained matters, and suggested that he chase the catboat at once.

"Who are those men, and why did they attack Rushton?" asked Mr. Fish.

"I don't know who they are nor why they went for him. Jennie tried to defend Jack, and then one of them turned on her. I tried to help Jack, too, but the rascal who had hold of him threatened to shoot us. When I took a chance a moment later he fired at me."

"That was the shot I heard."

"Yes. When I closed in on him—for he missed me—he knocked me silly by a blow in the face with his fist. I recovered only in time to see the boat slipping away from the island."

"This is a very serious matter," said Mr. Fish. "We certainly must follow the rascals. This yacht will catch any catboat ever built."

While issuing his orders to his small crew, who were unable to understand what had happened, Mr. Fish listened to the tearful account given by Ada of the affair.

The yacht soon swept around the island and was presently headed for the catboat, which they made out a mile or so in advance to the southwest.

The catboat, however, was a smart sailor and was well handled.

Moreover, a stern chase is generally a long one.

But the ultimate result of the pursuit could hardly be in doubt, for the yacht, as soon as she got down to business, began to steadily overhaul the smaller craft.

In the cabin of the catboat Jack soon recovered his senses which the butt of the revolver had sadly deranged.

He came to, to find Jennie's arms around him and the girl crying as if her heart would break.

"Oh, Jack, dear Jack, speak to me!" she sobbed.

Rushton struggled into a sitting posture.

"Hello, Jennie! Where the dickens have we got to?"

"They've carried us aboard this boat, and are sailing away with us," she answered.

"They!" cried Jack. "What are you talking about?"

His senses were still a bit confused and he did not thoroughly realize the situation.

She made it all clear to him in a minute.

"The rascals!" exclaimed the boy. "So they've made prisoners of us, eh? And they are carrying us away? I'll bet they'll find their hands full making trouble for us."

Jack got up and tried the cabin door, but found it fast.

"They seem to have us dead to rights for the present," he said. "It's a long lane that hasn't a turning. Don't worry, Jennie—we'll get out of this trouble all right, just as we got out of the cliff affair, and that was pretty strenuous while it lasted. These chaps think they see a way of getting even with us—me, particularly. I'll bet I'll fool them before they're much older. It won't be long before they're back in jail, where they belong."

Presently he heard the two men outside in the cockpit talking excitedly together.

Mr. Fish's yacht was rapidly overhauling the catboat.

The rascals were cursing their luck in round terms, and trying to think of some way out of the trap fast closing in about them.

Finally Damon said: "We made a mistake letting those other two escape. They carried the news to the yacht, which is now overhauling us. There may be officers aboard her, for all we know. We must head in for the nearest point of the shore, and let the boy and the girl shift for themselves. If necessary to gain time, we'll toss the girl overboard. They'll have to come to in order to save her. That may enable us to escape. If it fails, we can throw the young chap over afterward. Between the two we ought to be able to reach the shore and make ourselves scarce."

This plan was adopted and the Water Witch pointed shoreward.

The chase was an exciting one to those aboard the yacht.

Mr. Fish, after considering the strangeness of the affair, suddenly hit upon the truth—that the rascals were the two crooks who had escaped from the Rockland jail.

That would in a measure account for their attacking Rushton, to whom they owed a grudge.

Every method possible was taken to increase the speed of the yacht.

The catboat had a big mainsail and a small jib.

Her pursuer, however, had a much bigger mainsail, two good-sized jibs, and a balloon topsail.

This spread of canvas in the rattling breeze blowing left very little show of the chase escaping.

The shore was still some distance away when the rascals

saw that they must make a decisive move or the game would be up in a few minutes.

The two boats were within half-pistol shot of each other.

"We must throw the girl over now or the jig will be up," said Damon. "Lash the tiller so you can lend me a hand. That young chap is bound to put up a fight."

The people aboard the yacht could easily see all that transpired on the catboat.

Damon and Morris left the tiller and went to the cabin door, which the former unlocked.

As they entered the cabin, Jack sprang to his feet.

Morris sprang at him to distract his attention while Damon seized Jennie.

He dragged her, screaming, through the doorway.

Rushton, not knowing what his intentions were but furious at the rough handling the girl was receiving, fought Morris like a tiger.

Morris was beaten back and finally knocked down by the intrepid boy, who jumped over his body and sprang through the door just a moment too late to save Jennie, who fell, shrieking, into the waves, while a cry of horror went up from those on the yacht.

Jack dashed at Damon, struck him a stunning blow on the head, and then, without a moment's delay, sprang overboard after the girl, who had disappeared under the water.

Damon, staggered by the hit he had received, lost his balance and pitched head first into the sea, while the catboat flew ahead like a frightened bird.

CHAPTER XV.

THE BOY WHO MADE GOOD.

With all his clothes on, Jack was at some disadvantage in the water, although he was a splendid swimmer.

He didn't think of that, though, but struck out for the spot where he saw Jennie go down.

At the same moment the yacht came up in the wind and Mr. Fish ordered the boat away to the rescue of the girl and the brave boy who had gone overboard to save her.

The Water Witch kept right on in spite of the fact that Morris had seen his associate in crime go into the sea.

The selfish instincts of the rascal, who thought only of saving himself now, caused him to abandon Damon to his fate.

"The yacht will pick him up," he said to himself. "It's better that one of us escape than both go to jail."

So he took hold of the tiller and guided the boat toward a spot where he believed he would be able to land at without any trouble.

When Jennie Norris came to the surface Jack caught sight of her golden hair in the sunshine and he struck out for her.

She was something of a swimmer herself, and instead of throwing up her hands she tried to keep herself afloat.

She had no great difficulty in doing this until Rushton glided up alongside of her and, putting one hand under her chin, encouraged her with the intelligence that a boat would soon reach them from the yacht.

The boat soon came up and took them in, and then the

sailors looked around for Damon, whom they had seen go overboard from Jack's blow.

He was made out swimming around a short distance away.

He was duly rescued from his peril, and the boat returned to the yacht.

Jennie was taken into the elegant little saloon cabin and turned over to Ada.

Jack was sent forward to the crew's quarters, where the chante was afforded him to get out of his drenched clothes.

One of the sailors loaned him a temporary outfit, and he was soon on deck again.

Damon was hustled down into the hold, given some old duds to put on in place of his wet garments, and then was bound to the mast until he could be turned over to the police.

The yacht continued on after the Water Witch, but the shore was too close now for Mr. Fish to hope to overtake her.

However, he determined to recover the boat, which he knew would be abandoned by the rascal on board just as soon as he could step ashore.

Morris beached the Water Witch on a strip of sand and then skipped as fast as he could.

Mr. Fish sent his rowboat to bring her off, and with the catboat in tow he started for Seaport harbor.

Half an hour later they passed the lighthouse and swept into the harbor.

"We've all had the time of our lives this afternoon," said Risdon to Jack, "particularly you and Jennie. We never dreamed when we started out on this trip that it was going to end with an exciting adventure."

"That's true enough," responded his chum.

"You seem to have a corner on hairbreadth escapes and such things," went on Ed. "You ought to be the hero of a story book, and Jennie the heroine."

"Nonsense!"

"No nonsense about it. Well, you two will be in the newspapers again, all right. You were born to get into the limelight, while I am fated to remain in obscurity."

"Are you anxious to see your name in print?" laughed Jack.

"I think I should like the sensation."

"Then I'll tell you how you might gratify your ambition in that respect."

"How?"

"Go out to the lighthouse some fine day, when the water is smooth, climb up to the gallery, and take a header into the ocean. I'll furnish the Seaport 'Times' with your photograph and a reliable obituary."

"Thanks, old chap. I'm not yearning to take that road to notoriety."

The yacht now reached her anchorage.

Ada came out of the cabin and asked Risdon to run up to Jennie's house for a change of clothes for her.

"You will have to tell her mother what happened to her, but be sure and tell her that Jennie is all right."

Mr. Fish went ashore in the boat with him and hastened to the station house, where he reported the capture and present whereabouts of one of the escaped crooks, and put the police on the track of the other.

Two officers were sent to take charge of Damon, while several policemen were despatched on the trail of Morris.

We may as well say here that Morris was recaptured on the following day, and rejoined his comrade in the Rockland jail.

They were duly tried for the robbery of the drygoods store, convicted, and sent to the State prison for a term of years.

By the time Jennie's clothes reached her and she had put them on, Jack had got back into his own garments.

Then he escorted her home and remained to supper, while Risdon went home with Ada and accepted an invitation to supper at her house.

Next morning the newspapers had the adventure in print, and the residents of Seaport were more than ever convinced that Jack Rushton was an ornament to the little town by the sea.

A month later Jack had his latest invention in shape for a trial of its powers.

He had no great difficulty in getting permission to make the experiment with his apparatus at the lighthouse on Coffin Rock.

A thick fog setting in one afternoon, Jack and Ed got a boatman to carry them and the framework with the glasses attached to the lighthouse.

The boatman landed them on the granite steps of the lighthouse just as the advancing line of fog came upon them, and then he hastily started on his return to the shore after promising to come out at nine in the morning to fetch the boys back.

"Gee! This fog is thick to-night, all right," said Ed, as they felt their way up the steps to the door. "You couldn't have a better chance to demonstrate what your invention can do."

The head keeper greeted them cordially and asked them if they had had supper.

They replied that they had.

"Well, do you want to go up to the lantern at once?"

"Yes, sir, if you've no objection," replied Jack.

The keeper led the way up the circular iron steps that landed them in the lantern, and Jack was soon at work fixing his frame of prisms close to the lamp.

It took longer than he expected, for he had to shift it many times before he had satisfied himself as to the focus.

The keeper watched him for some time in silence and then withdrew to attend to other duties.

It must have been ten o'clock before Jack had fixed everything to his satisfaction, and then he and Risdon stepped out of the lantern on to the gallery to breathe with satisfaction the fresh night air, and to note the effect of the light as now cast upon the fog.

They found that the fog was denser than ever, and that the rays of the lantern were shining in a thick cloud, so that it was as if there was a luminous ring or halo about the top of the lighthouse.

Jack walked slowly around the gallery twice, followed by his chum.

Then he stopped on the land side furthest from where he had fixed his prisms, and waited to rest his eyes and then look at his work afresh.

Below him he could hear the soft rush of the coming

tide, and the low whistling and sucking noises made by the returning waves, and by instinct he knew that the tide must be coming in fast, though everything was invisible below.

He covered his eyes with his hands for a few moments, so as to shut out all light, and then, shading them by holding one hand at the side of his face next the lantern, he walked slowly around the gallery again.

Yes, his invention was successful—there was no mistake about it.

The light streamed forth through the glass sides of the lantern, for the lamp burned brilliantly and its reflectors were polished to the highest pitch; but where he had fixed his prisms there struck out a band of brighter light clearly distinguishable from the other—a whiter, purer light, that made a clear square patch upon the fog, that looked silvery upon a ground of gold.

"See, Ed" he shouted triumphantly to his companion. "See the difference between the two lights—mine is the white one. It's a grand success!"

"Gee! It makes the other look like thirty cents," replied Risdon.

The head keeper appeared at that moment, and Jack pointed to the effect of his prisms on the fog, and the man was obliged to acknowledge that the new light was infinitely superior in penetrating power and brightness to the regular light.

And so the report went to Washington in a few days, and an expert was sent to Seaport to see the new invention.

Jack tried it for his benefit on a clear night, and the man was satisfied of the improved capacity furnished by the boy's method of applying the prisms.

The invention was duly patented and was adopted by the lighthouse board.

Jack Rushton's name was heralded throughout the country, and Seaport was prouder of him than ever.

So was Jennie Norris, who was satisfied there was no one in all the world half as smart or as good as the boy who was one day to be her husband—the boy who had taken

A WINNING RISK AND MADE GOOD.

THE END.

Read "FROM A DIME TO A MILLION; OR, A WIDEAWAKE WALL STREET BOY," which will be the next number (102) of "Fame and Fortune Weekly."

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GOOD STORIES.

Alligators, as a rule, have a regular place of retreat, in the bank of a stream or pond. This is excavated with their fore-paws, and, according to Florida alligator hunters, the dirt is carried away in the mouth of the engineer, who backs into deep water and discharges its load, then returns to renew the operation until it has made itself a capacious home under water. This will readily account for the size of its mouth, for it must not only procure food, but must also act as a mud scow. The female adopts the same method for building her nest, and not only fills her mouth, but also takes a load between her forelegs when she is in a hurry. She can by this means accomplish much work in a day, for she never seems to tire. It is quite amusing to watch a young mother build her first nursery, she being not only fussy and vigilant, but so suspicious that a few fluttering leaves startle her out of her wits.

A plague of monkeys recently sorely troubled the officials at a small station on the Saran railway in Northwest India. Trucks full of grain for export were often stored up in the station and the monkeys came down in large numbers from a neighboring grove to help themselves to the grain, picking holes in the tarpaulin roofs of the wagons. The officials were wearied out with keeping watch and scaring away the thieves, who daily grew bolder, until an ingenious guard hit upon a stratagem. For several days sweets and fruits were put on the roofs of the wagons, with the result that the whole of the monkey colony were soon attracted to the spot and became perfectly indifferent to man. One morning, when they were all busily feeding, an engine was attached to the wagons, and suddenly the train moved off. The monkeys were quite scared and they made no attempt to escape, sitting crouched together until the train had gone several miles and stopped at the jungle. Then they wanted no hint to leave. Every monkey leaped down howling and escaped into the jungle, whence they have never returned to trouble the railway.

Physiognomists rely greatly upon the expression and color of the eye in reading character. It is said that deep blue eyes indicate a mind disposed to coquetry, but still bespeak a heart capable of pure, unswerving, ardent love. Gray eyes signify dignity, intelligence and large reasoning powers. Greenish eyes belong to a nature in which will be found, in the majority of cases, jealousy, falsehood, scandal and malice. Where the white is tinged with yellow and streaked with reddish veins, the eyes are the reflectors of passion and hasty temper. Restless eyes, that cannot look one steadily in the face, denote a scheming, treacherous disposition. Quiet eyes signify self-command, complacency, and a modicum of conceit. Black eyes tell you of slumbering passions and an active disposition, sometimes marred with a tinge of deceit.

The brown eye is loving, tender, honest and faithful, indicating a nature full of generosity, kindness and happiness.

To tan skin with the hair on, spread out the skin with the flesh side up; have ready a mixture composed of two parts of salt and two parts of saltpeter and alum combined, pounded very fine. Sprinkle this thickly and evenly over the surface of the skin; then roll it up and leave it for a few days until the applied powder has become thoroughly dissolved. Then stretch the skin tightly on a board and scrape it until the pelt is quite free from any adhering bits of flesh or membrane. Place the stretched skin in the sun until it is dry; then rub well with neat'sfoot oil and put in the sun for a day or two. Then scrape the oil off with a piece of wood, and dust thoroughly with plaster of Paris or whiting, which has been heated quite hot in an oven, rubbing it in with a flannel cloth. Now, when dried and well brushed, the skins are ready for manufacture into garments, etc.

The seven wonders of the world are given as follows: The Egyptian Pyramids, the mausoleum erected by Artemisia, the temple of Diana at Ephesus, the walls and hanging gardens of Babylon, the Colossus at Rhodes, the statue of Jupiter Olympius, and the Pharos or watch-tower of Alexandria. The seven wonders of the modern world are: 1, art of printing; 2, optical instruments, such as the microscope and telescope; 3, gunpowder; 4, the steam engine; 5, labor-saving machinery; 6, the electric telegraph; 7, the photograph. The telephone was invented by Prof. Reuse, of Friedrichshoff, Germany, and was first made public in 1865.

JOKES AND JESTS.

Mrs. Meekton—What do you think, James? Mother says she wants to be cremated.

James—All right; tell her to get her things on and I'll take her down now.

"Why, man; there are no fish in that pond."

"Why did you tell me? I was having a fine time."

King Alfonso urges more warships. If he'll give each ship one of the baby's names he'll have a navy that will make the other nations sit up and take notice.

"You don't seem to be trying to gain the confidence of the public."

"No," answered the investment promoter. "So many big schemes that people had confidence in have become subjects of investigation that as soon as they see you trying to get their confidence they run away."

Maud—Did you kiss Dolly when you left her last night?

Dick—Certainly not. Why do you ask?

Maud—Oh, nothing. Only she was speaking of you to-day, and she said she liked your cheek.

Mrs. McSwillem—I should think you'd have more self-respect than to drink the way do you.

Mr. McSwillem—Self-r'spect, m' dear? I'm sho full self-r'spect, m' dear, that I enter every shloon by back door.

"Why have you been absent from school?" demanded the teacher.

"Why," replied the boy. "Mom broke 'er arm Monday."

"But this is Wednesday. Why did you stay away two days?"

"Why—er—it was broke in two places."

A cookery teacher was giving a lesson to a class of children and questioning them on the joints of mutton. The neck, shoulder, leg and loin had been mentioned.

"Now," said the teacher, "there is another joint no one has mentioned. Come, Mary, I know your father is a groom; what does he often put on a horse?"

"A shilling each way, miss," was the unexpected answer.

THE MANOR GHOST

A STORY OF COLONIAL DAYS.

By Col. Ralph Fenton.

Throckton Manor it was called, that grand old mansion which stood upon a rise of land overlooking Boston Harbor, now known as Dorchester Heights.

All the spreading farm land about belonged to this noble estate, and Colonel Throckton, the genial proprietor, was a man noted and beloved for his benevolence and charity.

His family consisted of two daughters, Margaret and Lucille, beautiful types of the American girl, and as proud and noble as they were beautiful.

At least this had been the size of his family for several years past. But there was one other member living, of whom, however, mention was never made in the Colonel's presence, for certain reasons.

Four years previous there had ridden forth from the manor grounds a young man, tall and straight and handsome. Allan Throckton was the Colonel's only son and the pride of his heart.

But, though at heart a well meaning and generous fellow, Allan Throckton was, sad to say, easy of influence. This failing it was which led to his downfall.

Allan had formed the acquaintance of several profligate young officers of the British army, at that time stationed in Boston. They were riotous fellows and bad company for so gentle a youth as Allan Throckton.

That afternoon he met his boon companions at a public house in Charlestown. There was drinking and riotous carousing.

In the midst of the drinking a dispute arose. Soon several of the party became embroiled, and an exciting scuffle followed.

In the melee Allan became mixed, though he had no interest. One of the party was fatally stabbed. The guard descended upon the place and all were placed under arrest.

The villainous crew all swore that Allan had struck the fatal blow. Their evidence seemed conclusive and he was thrust into prison. That night news of the whole terrible affair reached Colonel Throckton.

The disgrace was almost more than the proud Colonel could bear. He refused to make intercession for his son, whom he was forced to believe guilty.

"It is the penalty for his disobedience of my good counsel!" he said. "I cannot interfere with justice. I have no son!"

In vain Margaret and Lucille and their mother strove to intercede for Allan. The Colonel was obdurate.

The day of the trial came.

Evidence so conclusive against Allan Throckton could not be gainsaid. He was adjudged guilty, and sentenced to be hanged.

At this point the resolution of the old Colonel was almost broken. Intercession for his son might have secured a pardon. But still he was firm.

"Let justice be done!" he said sternly.

And now came a startling report. This one day reached the manor that Allan had made his escape with some other convicts and had fled to a foreign land.

Twice again was he heard of. Once by letter to his mother pleading for funds to save him from starvation, which were secretly sent. Again a report of his death. This latter was a shock from which Mrs. Throckton never recovered.

Death quickly ensued. Not until Colonel Throckton stood over his wife's grave did he relent. Then he would have given his fortune to have had Allan back.

Every effort was made to find the burial place of his lost son. But all was in vain. This fearful sorrow lay at the bottom of the Colonel's heart and served to greatly embitter his whole life.

Lucille and Margaret developed into beautiful womanhood. In all the country about they were beloved for many kind acts and deeds of charity.

Thus matters were when the great Revolutionary war broke out. The colonies had decided to throw off the yoke of the mother country.

Colonel Throckton was at once a patriot. He sided with the Americans wholly and without reserve.

By deed and gift of large sums of money he aided the cause materially. This brought him into disrepute among the Tories and Royalists, but he cared not for that.

The feeling, however, among a certain predominant class in Boston was very hard against him. There were even serious rumors of a proposed attack upon the manor.

Determined to be prepared for any such lawless act, the Colonel increased his retinue, placed arms and ammunition in the house, and stood ready for a vigorous defense.

About this time some very mysterious happenings took place in the manor. Had the Colonel been at all inclined to superstition, he might have been alarmed.

Reports were made in thrilling accents of the existence of a veritable ghost in various parts of the manor and at various times.

The servants were so confident of this that they could hardly be induced to remain in the mansion. It was a curious and perplexing state of affairs.

The Colonel became very angry. He denounced them as an ignorant crew, as blockheads and knaves. Yet this did not disprove the ghost theory.

Indeed, matters reached such a pitch that the servants positively refused to enter the west wing, where it was declared the apparition held forth.

This part of the manor had been in disuse for a number of years. Here were the old furniture, paintings and tapestries all brought from abroad by the Throckton ancestors. What was more fitting than that the former owners should return to the haunts once so dear to them.

Thus the superstitious servants reasoned. But Colonel Throckton would not give ear to their stories.

"You are all ignorant fools!" he declared. "I have no patience with you!"

But Lucille and Margaret were perhaps more liberal in their views. While they did not believe in the supernatural, yet they did not wholly discredit the statements of the servants.

Margaret became convinced that the ghost actually existed and that it was a tangible reality. Some person for some unknown purpose was playing the game. This was her most practical reasoning.

Lucille shared this belief. This led to mutual comparisons, and the sisters decided to personally and unbeknown to any one make an exploration of the west wing.

Fear was not a component part of their natures. Therefore they did not shrink from the undertaking.

"Do you know, Margaret," said Lucille in an earnest voice, "I had a strange dream last night? Oh, would that it might come true!"

"A dream!" exclaimed the older sister. "What was it, sister mine?"

"I thought Allan came home and that father was very happy, for he said that his son had brought him after all honor and not disgrace."

Margaret drew a deep breath.

"Heaven knows I wish that might be true," she said; "but that cannot be in this life!"

Now that it was decided to explore the west wing, preparations were quickly made.

The girls donned light dresses and soft slippers that their movements might not be hampered.

"It is desirable that the ghost shall not hear us approach," said Margaret, with a smile. "The superstitious folly of these servants must be disposed of."

No weapons of any kind were taken. The two young girls simply unbarred the huge oaken door and entered the musty wing.

Not for some years had a visit been made to this part of the house. It was, indeed, something like entering a tomb, and in spite of their pluck the girls shivered.

Lucille clung to Margaret's arm. From one room to another they slowly and silently passed.

Lucille, being near-sighted, carried a pair of glasses, with which she was able to inspect the curious old trumpery with which the rooms were packed.

From one duty and musty room to another they went. The soft slippers they wore prevented the noise of their footfalls awaking the echoes.

They finally paused before the tapestry of an ancestor, upon which was depicted the hunting party of a former owner of the manor with hounds and horses. Against it sat an antique high-backed chair, and just beyond was a heavy carved oak mantel.

"I presume in the day of it that tapestry was considered a mighty work of art," said Margaret, with a smile. "To me it is only a very dirty and wretched piece of work."

Then they turned away from the tapestry. Just beyond was an open door. The two girls instantly paused in the middle of the polished floor.

Instantly Margaret clutched Lucille's arm and with a smothered exclamation and a look upon her face half of terror and half of surprise, pointed through the open door, at the same time saying huskily and with startling force:

"My soul! do you see that Lucille? It is really the ghost!"

The sight which both girls beheld was a thrilling one. There by a window which was half shielded with vines and looked out upon the lawn was a human figure.

Tall and straight in form it was. The face in profile was ghastly white. A long black cloak hung to the feet of the unknown.

Although both girls believed this apparition to be human and tangible, yet they inwardly admitted that he was strangely supernatural in looks and manner.

"Come, let us go after help," whispered Lucille. "He may be a madman."

"No!" said Margaret, determinedly. "I mean to learn who he is and what he wants here."

With which the young girl walked boldly forward into the room where the ghost stood. Her appearance was evidently a shock to the unknown.

A sharp, gasping cry escaped his lips and he reeled back.

"Betrayed!" he gasped. "I will die hard! But, mercy, what is this?"

"It means that you are discovered," said Margaret, sternly. "Who are you, and what is your business here in this masquerading fashion?"

The intruder averted his face and seemed for a moment the victim of some powerful emotion. When he replied his voice had a peculiar ring which gave Margaret a start, for it seemed to her that she had heard it before.

"I am an object of pity. I am not here to do any one harm, but rather to visit scenes most dear to me."

Both girls were puzzled by this inexplicable reply. Lucille whispered:

"Come, let us away. He is surely a madman and may do us harm!"

But Margaret was determined to fathom the identity and meaning of the man. A sudden cold, strange apprehension had assailed her.

"Yet you are intruding upon another's premises," said Margaret, sternly. "What can you say in your defense? Tell me, who you are!"

"If I were to do that, I would let free a flood of past memories which would not be pleasant to you or to me!"

Margaret clenched her hands, stepping nearer.

"Now you must and shall tell me who you are!" she said, forcibly. Her heart beat wild and fast with sudden premonition.

Without lifting his head the strange intruder replied:

"I will say this: I am one who has suffered great wrongs. Banished to foreign climes, I have striven long to prove my innocence of a foul crime of which I have been unjustly accused!"

A hoarse, passionate cry escaped Margaret's lips. With a step forward she grasped the arm of the speaker and forced him back so that they were face to face.

"It is, it is!" she screamed. "Heaven be praised! Oh, Lucille, my sister, our brother Allan has come back."

A wild cry of joy escaped Lucille and both girls were instantly in the "ghost's" arms. That was a joyful moment.

Worn and haggard and older by many years Allan Throckton looked. Life had been a sad and fearful experience for him.

Then he told them the story of his many adventures since leaving home.

"I have roamed the world over," he declared. "My one purpose has been to find the man who can prove me innocent. He was one of the party in the tavern that fatal day. His name is John Melden. From England I tracked him to India, thence back to Europe, where he entered the King's army and is even now in Boston."

"In Boston!" cried Margaret, "then you will find him!"

"I hope to."

"But it matters not now, Allan. We have never believed you guilty, and father does not now. He has prayed long for your return, for none of us have believed you dead."

The young prodigal's eyes filled with happy tears.

"That gives me great joy," he said. "Yet I must prove my innocence beyond all doubt. That I shall be able to do, for Melden has agreed to make a confession, and my friend Lieutenant Clarke, of the American army, is to bring it to me tonight."

"Then I shall stand cleared of the crime. I came here secretly that I might once more view those scenes so dear to me without your knowing of my presence. Do you really believe that my father will welcome me back?"

"We know it!" cried both girls. "Oh, Allan, it will make joyful the last years of his life."

The youth was deeply swayed by emotion. Then he drew himself up, and his pale face flushed, and his voice had a grand ring as he cried:

"I will do more than this to make him happy. I disgraced the name of Throckton, now I will add honor to it. Listen! I was with Washington in his Delaware campaign. From simple corporal I have risen to the post of colonel. If I win honor in the battle now impending—that of Yorktown—I shall be promoted to general, and my country will know that I have stood by her in the time of need."

The young Colonel turned to the balcony.

"Now I must go to meet Clarke!" he said. "If he has Melden's deposition, I will be assured that my innocence is proved. Then I go to join Washington. Wait until after the great battle to hear from me again. If you hear of the defeat of Cornwallis, know that all is well, and that you will see me home again ready to redeem the name of Throckton. Farewell!"

At that moment, below in the shrubbery, appeared a tall, handsome young officer. Allan threw open the window, and leaping down, joined him. Both lifted their hats and disappeared. The glimpse of the young officer had been but brief, but Lucille carried his image ever after in her heart as the very handsomest youth she had ever seen.

Much excited, the girls left the west wing and returned to their apartments. They discreetly informed no one of their solution of the ghost mystery. But they counted the days and hours until the news of the great battle came.

The defeat of Cornwallis is inscribed on history's pages. Great joy reigned in the manor that day. Scarcely forty-eight hours later a detachment of American soldiers rode into the manor yard.

A general's staff led them, and two dashing young officers rode in front. General Throckton and Colonel Clarke alighted and entered the grand old mansion.

What use to describe the scene which followed? It was a deliriously happy meeting. Colonel Throckton was rendered nigh insane with joy at this happy return of his son.

There was merrymaking at the manor for many days. It was then that Lucille met face to face the young officer she had seen in the shrubbery. It was love at first sight, and Colonel Clarke met his happiest fate. But Margaret always remained single, a noble and wondrously beautiful type of the womanhood of old colonial days.

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